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THE CONVICT:

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A Tale.

BY G. P. R. JAMES, ESQ.

AUTHOR OF

"THE SMUGGLER," "DARNLEY," "RICHELIEU,"

ETC. ETC.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

N.B.—A German Translation of this work is published for the Author by MESSRS. DÜNCKER & HUMBLOTT, BERLIN.

LONDON:

SMITH, ELDER AND CO., 65, CORNHILL.

1847.

PREFACE.

To tell a very simple story, in the simplest possible manner, was the object of the author in writing the work which follows. Very few words, therefore, are necessary in way of preface; and none, perhaps, would have been written, had it not been pointed out to me, that men might suppose one of the characters in the work to be intended for the type of a profession, when, in reality, it is nothing more than the picture of an individual.

In the priest, I have represented a person acting upon principles which I have heard

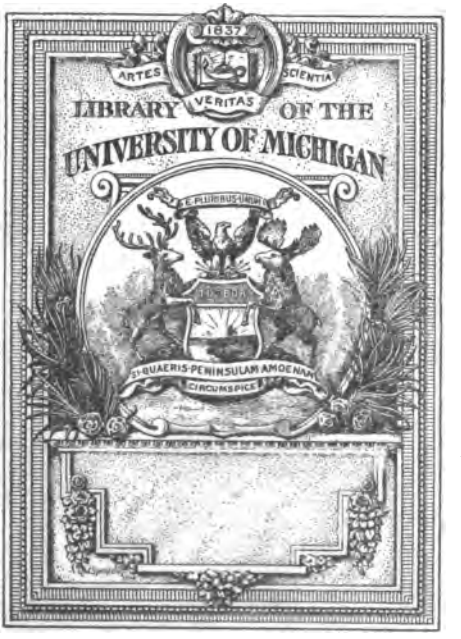
maintained by a living man, and performing deeds which there is much reason to believe that living man performed. The same acts could not have been perpetrated by a Protestant in any ordinary circumstances, because he would not have had at command the same means of influencing the minds of others; but I beg most distinctly to state, that I do not put forth this personage as a specimen of the Roman-catholic clergy, many of whom are amongst the most estimable men I ever knew.

THE CONVICT.

CHAPTER I.

It may be very well in most cases to plunge, according to the rule of the Latin poet, into the middle of things.—It may be very well even, according to the recommendation of Count Antoine Hamilton, to "begin with the beginning."—But there are other cases where there may be antecedents to the actual story, which require to be known before the tale itself is rightly comprehended. With this view, then, I will give one short scene not

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cheerful and almost jocular expression of the lips and eyes. Indeed, he was a man of great eminence in science and in literature, who, having in early life conquered all the difficulties of very arduous pursuits, found no longer any trouble in those tasks which would have startled or overpowered many another man, and who consequently walked lightly under burdens which had become familiar, and which had, in reality, no weight for him, because he had become accustomed to bear them.

"Well, Edward," he said—the young man was a distant relation of his own—"still poring and plodding! My dear lad, you must not carry this too far. You have already done much, very much, and you must take some thought of health."

The young man rose with a faint smile, and placed a chair for his old relation. "I have both your example and your precept, my dear sir," he replied, "for pursuing the course before

me without relaxation. You told me, some four years ago, that before you were as old as I was then, you had taken high honours at this university. I could only do so last year; and you have often said that unremitting study in youth is the only means of winning a title in after years to repose and enjoyment. Besides, I must study hard to recover lost time, and to fit myself for the course before me."

"True, true, very true," rejoined the elder man; "but you have studied hard for nearly six years now. There was the great fault. You did not begin early enough; your father should have sent you here full two years before you came. Let me see: you are now six-and-twenty, and for any man destined to fight his way in one of the learned professions, it is never too early to begin to labour."

"But neither my poor father nor myself," replied the young gentleman, "were at all aware that I should ever have, as you so justly call it, to fight my way in one of the learned

professions. I was then the heir of six or seven thousand a year; I have now only the income of a fellowship, and that I could not have obtained had I not been supported here by your bounty."

"Say nothing of that, Edward," replied the other; "neither let us look back. You have done enough for the present. You have distinguished yourself here; after the long vacation, you will be called to the bar, and eminence doubtless is before you; but still there are a few hard steps to be taken, which require strength of body as well as powers of mind, and in your case both mind and body will suffer if you pursue this course any farther.—Come, I have something to propose, which I think will be gratifying to you, and which I know will be good for you. The friends of a young nobleman, whose father I knew well, have written to request that I would recommend to them some competent person to accompany their relation upon a short tour which he is about imme-

diately to make upon the continent. The terms they propose are very liberal; the expedition will be a pleasant one; and if you choose to undertake the task, it will refresh and invigorate you both mentally and corporeally. The young man will be of age in the autumn, and will return about the very time when you are to be called to the bar. The connexion is a very good one, and few men get on in life without powerful friends. By both information and character you are fitted to do justice to the trust reposed in you, and my advice is to accept the offer without hesitation. You know I would not recommend anything to you without due consideration of all the circumstances."

The young man paused thoughtfully ere he replied. The temptation was too strong to be resisted. At the time when all his prospects in life were blighted, he had been preparing to set out—with all the resources of wealth at his command—upon such a tour as that in which he was now desired to share. Very different were

the circumstances, it is true, but still the pleasures which he had then anticipated had nought to do with wealth, except as a means. He had formed no schemes of display, of luxury, or splendour: he had only thought of visiting scenes rich in natural beauty and historic recollections; of treading where great men had trod; of dwelling for a time where great deeds had been performed; of seeing the face of earth in its most beautiful and its grandest aspects; and all that was now before him. But yet there was a certain repugnance to the idea of dependence, to the thought of linking himself, even for a time, to a being of whose character, conduct, and views, he knew nothing, and his first reply was doubtful.

"Who is this young lord, my dear sir?" he asked. "I should be very willing to go, as you judge it right—for, to say the truth, I am very weary of this life, which only the strong impulse of necessity has made me follow—but you can easily conceive I should not like the

task of guiding every young man through Europe;" and he added, with a melancholy smile, "I am not fitted for bear leading, as you know, and in this world there are many bears in high places."

"True," replied his relation, with a slightly sarcastic smile, and a touch of that unextinguishable jealousy which exists between St. John's and another great college—"true; we see that, every day at Trinity; but this young man is not a bear, nor a bear's cub; or, at all events, he is well licked. It is young Lord Hadley, whom you must have seen."

"Oh! I know him well," replied the student, with a well-satisfied look; "though not perfection, he is very much better than most young men of the present day—a little rash, a little given to dissipation, perhaps, but right at heart, kind and well feeling; too easily led, but yet, I do believe, always preferring right to wrong."

"As to rashness," replied his companion,

"you are rash enough, Ned, yourself; and as to his being easily led, that will be an advantage while he is with you. You have that decision of character which he wants; and will, I am sure, have power to restrain his habits of dissipation, and supply that firmness—for the time at least—of which he is destitute. I can see by your face that you are willing to undertake the task, and therefore I shall write in that sense."

Thus saying, he was turning towards the door; but he stopped after taking a step or two, and, coming back to the table, laid down upon it a piece of paper, which—with one of those curious tricks whereof most men have some—he had been twisting first round one finger and then round another, during the whole time that the conversation lasted. "You will want a supply for your preparations, my dear lad," he said; "there is a cheque for a couple of hundred pounds. You can repay me when you are a judge."

"Indeed I do not want it," answered the

other, with a slight glow coming into his face, "I have quite enough."

"Pooh! nonsense," said the old man; "if you have enough without it, buy oranges with it." And without waiting for farther discussion, he left the room.

CHAPTER II.

It was a dark autumnal night, the wind was strong and very fierce, sweeping along over fields and downs, tearing the branches and the withering leaves from the trees, and screaming along the rocks and tall precipitous cliffs upon a high and iron-bound part of the coast of England. There was no moon in the sky, but from time to time the sudden glance and disappearance of a star showed how rapidly the dull gray clouds were hurried over the face of the heavens; and the moaning of the trees and shrubs, added to the wild whistling of the gale, showed how it vexed the still, reposing,

rooted things of creation in its harsh fury as it swept through them.

On the summit of one of the most elevated points upon the coast, there was a little indentation, extending from the highest point of the downs to the edge of the cliff, where it was somewhat lower than at other places. This little hollow was sheltered from most of the winds that blew, except when a gale came very nearly due west; and in consequence of this protection, some low scrubby trees had gathered themselves together, as in a place of refuge, never venturing to raise their heads above the neighbouring slopes, but spreading out broad and tolerably strong in the lower part of the dell. From them there was a footpath extending on either side; on the one, leading to the top of the precipice, on the other, to the high road, which lay at about half a mile's distance. The path was little frequented, and the short mountain grass encroaching upon it here and there, almost obli-

terated the track, but in passing towards the top of the cliff it wound in and out amongst some large stones and rocks, with here and there a scattered tree overshadowing it as it ran on.

By the side of one of those rocks, on the night of which I speak, and guarded by it from the direct course of the blast, were seated three powerful men, each of whom had reached what is called the middle age. They had a lantern with them; and between the lantern and the road, one of them was seated with his back to the latter, his left shoulder touching the rock, and his face towards the sea. Thus, no one coming from the eastward could see the light itself, although, perhaps, a faint general glimmer could be perceived; but at the same time the lantern could be distinguished by any one on the sea at the distance of half a mile or more. Within that distance, the interposing cliff must have cut it off from the eyes of wanderers upon the wave.

The men were evidently watching for something, and, as usually happens in such moments of expectation, their conversation was broken and desultory. None of them *seemed* to be armed, and two of them were clothed in sailors' jackets, while the third wore a large shaggy great-coat, such as was commonly at that time used by pilots. He was a tall, strong, good-looking man enough, with a dark complexion, and a skin apparently well accustomed to exposure in all sorts of weathers, being rough and florid, and appearing, perhaps, more so than was really the case, from the glare of the lantern and the contrast of his own grey hair, as its long curls waved about in the night wind. The others were ordinary, hard-featured men, with that sort of grave, self-composed aspect, which is not at all unusual in sailors of all classes—men of few words and vigorous action, who can perhaps troll a song or crack a jest with their boon companions, but who are the most opposite creatures in the world

to the sailor of drama or romance. But he in the rough coat had something about him which could not well be passed without attention by any one who had even ordinary powers of observation; and yet it is very difficult to describe what it was, for as he sat there, perfectly still and tranquil, there was nothing, to all appearance, likely to call for remark. Yet it would have been difficult for any one to watch him at that moment without feeling that there was a something impressive in his figure —a dignity of aspect, it may be called, for there is such a thing even in the rudest and least cultivated.

The wind whistled loud and strong—it was heard rushing and roaring farther down, and hissing and screaming high above over the bleak tops of the hills. There was a cheerless, desolate sound about it, a sound of warning and of woe. Well might the traveller hasten towards his journey's end, and the weary, houseless wanderer seek the shelter of shed or outhouse, or the warm

side of the farmer's stack. But still those three men sat there almost motionless. The rock protected them to a certain degree, but the blast would whirl round the point and sweep chilling in amongst them. They were very silent, too, and not a word had been spoken for some ten minutes, when one said to the other, "It wont do; the wind's getting to the southward, and if it shifts but one point, she can't lay her course."

"We must wait and see," said the man in the rough coat. "I hope they wont try, if the wind does shift."

"It has shifted already," said the third; "it is coming right over from the great house."

No reply was made, and they all fell into silence again.

"I hope your people are keeping a good look-out, Master Clive," said one of the two sailor-looking men, after another long pause. "Didn't I hear that you had sent your two young men away over to Dorchester?"

"I did it on purpose," replied the other;

"but do not you be afraid of the look-out. It is trusted to one who wont be found wanting."

"It would be awkward if any of them were to pounce upon us," rejoined the other.

"They might rue it," replied the man in the pilot's coat; and again the conversation stopped.

About three minutes after, there was heard a loud halloo from the side of the high-road, and one of the men started up; but the voice of him they called Clive was heard saying, in a low tone, "Lie close, lie close! I don't know the tongue; some drunken fool, perhaps, who has lost his way; but we shall soon see." And at the same time, drawing the lantern nearer to him, he put his hand into one of the large pockets of his coat, and pulled out a pistol, which he looked at by the dull light. The next instant the halloo was repeated, and the cock of the pistol was heard to click.

"They are coming this way," said one of the sailors; "hadn't we better dowse the glim, Master Clive?"

"No," replied the other, sternly; "would you have me endanger the boat and our friends in her, to save myself from a little risk?"

As he spoke, steps were heard coming along the side of the hill, and the moment after, a voice called aloud, "Is there a person of the name of Clive there?"

The tone was that of a gentleman—there was no country accent, no broad pronunciation; and Clive instantly started up, replying, "Yes; what do you want with me?"

"I am sorry to tell you," said the voice they had heard, "that an accident has happened to your daughter;" and at the same time a tall, powerful, and handsome young man advanced towards the light. "It is not, I trust, very serious," he added, in a kindly tone, as if anxious to allay the apprehensions which his first words must have produced. "I am afraid her right arm is broken, but she complains of no other injury."

The old man put the pistol he had in his hand to the half-cock, and replaced the weapon in his pocket, gazing in the stranger's face with a look of apprehension and inquiry, but without making any reply for some moments.

"Are you telling me the truth, sir?" he said, at length.

"I am, indeed," replied the stranger; "I would not deceive you for the world. A gentleman, with whom I have been travelling, and myself, got out of the carriage to walk up the hill, and just at the top I saw something lying near the road, and heard, as I thought, a groan. On going nearer, I found a girl, partly covered with stones and dirt, and apparently unable to extricate herself. She said she was not much hurt, but could not shake off the mass that had fallen upon her, being unable to use her right arm."

"It's that devil of a wall has fallen upon her," said one of the sailors; "I knew it would come down some day in the first gale, for it

was all bulging out, and nothing but loose stones at the best."

"Exactly so," said the stranger; "such was the account of the accident she herself gave; but it would seem that the wall brought part of the bank with it, which probably prevented the stones from injuring her more severely."

"Where is she?" demanded Clive, abruptly.

"She is in the carriage, just where the path joins the high road. We were taking her home as fast as possible, when she asked me to come down hither, and give you information of what had happened, for she said it was necessary you should know."

"Ay! she is a dear, good girl," said the man, in reply; "she always thinks of those things; but I must think of her. I will go up with you, sir. You stay here, lads, and keep a good look out till after the tide has made; it will be no use staying any longer." And with a quick step he led the way along the edge of the little basin in the hills, taking a much shorter path

than that which had been followed by his visitor while seeking him. As he went, he asked a few questions, brief and abrupt, but to the point; and after every answer, fell back into thought again. It is probable that apprehension for his child occupied his mind in those silent pauses, for the heart of affection is never satisfied with any tale, however true, however circumstantial, when a beloved object has been injured. We always ask ourselves, Is there not something more?

At length, as they mounted over the slope, the lighted lamps of a carriage could be seen on the high road, at a little distance, and in a moment after—for he now sprang forward eagerly—Clive was by the side of the vehicle. Two servants, one of whom was dressed in the costume of a courier, with a gold band round his cap, and a good deal of black silk braid on his coat, were standing by the side of the carriage, and one of them immediately threw open the door.

"I am not hurt, dearest father," said a sweet, mellow voice, from within—"that is to say, I am very little hurt. These two gentlemen have been very kind to me, and would insist upon taking me home, otherwise I would not have gone away, indeed."

"You would have done very wrong to stay, my child," answered Clive; "and I thank the gentlemen much for their kindness. Can you walk now, Helen?"

"She shall not walk a step to-night, Mr. Clive," said a young gentleman, who was sitting in the farther corner of the carriage; "she is not fit for it; and we will not suffer such a thing. Nay more, I think it would be very much better for you to get in and take her home. I and my friend can follow on foot very well. It is but a short distance, and she has been telling me the way. Here, Müller, open this door." And before any one could stop him he was out of the carriage.

Clive made some opposition, but he suffered

it to be overruled by the persuasions of the two gentlemen, and in a minute or two was seated by the side of his daughter, in the handsome travelling carriage which had brought her thither, and was rolling away towards his own house, the road to which the postillions seemed to know well. The two young gentlemen sauntered slowly after on foot, conversing over the accident which had diversified their journey.

"She seems to me to be exceedingly pretty," said the younger one, who had been left with her in the carriage, while the other went to seek Clive.

"Her language and manners, too," rejoined the other, "are very much superior to her father's apparent station. What in heaven's name could she be doing out there at this time of night?"

"Perhaps looking for her lover," replied the younger, with a laugh.

"No, no," said his companion; "her own

words and her father's will not admit of such a supposition. I have some doubt as to the trade of the parties; but she certainly seems very little fitted to take part in it, if it be what I suspect. Are you sure you know the way?"

"Oh! quite sure," answered the other; "we are to go on till we come to a finger-post, and then to turn down the lane to the left. That will lead us to the house, and she says there is no other there."

"The moon is getting up, I think, to guide us," said the elder of the two young men; and then, after a moment's silence, during which his thoughts wandered wide, he added, "I dare say we shall be able to get some information at the house as to this good Master Clive's avocations. He had a cocked pistol in his hand when I came up, and did not seem at all well pleased at being disturbed."

In such sort of chat they walked on, the moon rising slowly, and spreading her silvery light over the scene. Sometimes she was

hidden for a moment by the rushing clouds; but, with the peculiar power of the soft planet, her beams seemed to absorb the vapours that sought to obscure them—as calm truth, shining on and growing brighter as it rises, devours the mists of prejudice and error, with which men's passions and follies attempt to veil it.

In about a quarter of an hour they reached the finger-post which had been mentioned, and there found one of the servants waiting to guide them on the way. By him they were informed that the house was not more than a quarter of a mile distant; and although one of the young gentlemen said that it might have been as well to order the carriage to come back to the high road as soon as it had set the poor girl and her father down, the other replied that it would be much better to go and see how she was, as there might be no surgeon in the neighbourhood, and they might be able to render some assistance.

A minute or two after, the road led them to

the brink of a little dell, narrow and well wooded, on the other side of which, rising high above the trees, appeared a tall house, flat, and not very picturesque, except from its accessaries, although the moon was now shining bright on the only side which the travellers saw. The road, winding about to avoid the dell, carried them round to the other side of the building, where they had to pass through a large farm-yard, the dogs in which recorded in very loud tones their protest against the admission of any strangers, although an old woman servant, with a light shaded by her apron, was waiting at the door to receive the expected guests.

The place into which they were admitted was evidently a large farmhouse of a very comfortable description. It might have been in former times, indeed, the seat of some country gentleman of small fortune, for the room on the left of the passage in which they entered was handsomely wainscoted with

oak, each panel of which was surrounded by a very respectable garland of flowers carved in the woodwork. There, too, was a little side-board, partly covered with china and glass, rather heterogeneous in its parts, and which might almost have furnished a history of glass ware from the time of the middle ages downwards. There were tall Venice glasses, cut and gilt like attar of rose bottles. There was the pleasant large claret glass, so light that it added nothing to the weight of the wine within, with a white spiral in the stalk, and sundry little stars ground upon the delicate sides. There was the large goblet, somewhat yellowish in tinge, rudely and bluntly cut and polished, looking almost like a cup of rock crystal; and in the centre was an exceedingly beautiful large chalice, richly gilt and ornamented, very delicate in form. But these were mingled with things of more common use, some handsome enough in their kind, but others of a sort

usually to be seen in the basket of an itinerant vendor of crockery and decanters.

I might go on farther, describing many other curious little things which that room contained, for there was a number of them; but I have gone far enough to give some idea of the place, and have done so not without thought; for, rightly read, I know few things that give a more correct indication of the character of particular persons — if they have any character at all, which is not always the case—than the objects with which they surround themselves in their familiar dwellings.

However, the two young gentlemen had hardly time to observe much, before a door, different from that by which they had entered, opened, and Clive himself came in. He had laid aside his heavy coat, and now appeared in the dress of a wealthy farmer; and certainly a powerful, well-looking, dignified man he was. There was no want of ease in his manners, though

they were not in the least familiar or self-sufficient. There seemed, indeed, a consciousness of powers mental and corporeal about him—a reliance upon his own nature, which left not the slightest touch of embarrassment in his demeanour. He never seemed to doubt that what he was doing and what he was saying was right, though without thinking it at all extraordinary or excellent.

"I am deeply obliged to you, gentlemen, both," he said; "and to you, sir, in particular;" and he turned to the elder of the two. "My daughter, thank God, is not much hurt; for though her arm is broken, I trust we shall get that set speedily."

"I hope you have some surgeon here," said the younger gentleman; "for whatever is to be done, had better be done at once."

"None nearer than the town, and that is seven miles," replied Clive; "most unfortunately, too, I have sent both my men to some distance, but I have ordered one of the girls to go and call

up the herd, and bid him bring the doctor directly."

"Why not send one of the post-boys?" said the young gentleman; "he is already mounted, and two horses will carry us easily on, for we cannot have more than two or three miles to go."

The proposal was adopted with many thanks, and the post-boy accordingly sent on, after which the farmer, for so we must call him, refrained, with a native sense of propriety, from loading the two strangers with any frther expressions of gratitude; but told them that his daughter would be glad to see them before they went, to thank them personally for the service they had rendered her.

"She is in the next room," he said, "and will not be satisfied unless I bring you there."

There was no great resistance made, for the younger man had a strong inclination to see whether, in the full light, she was as pretty as she had seemed; and his companion felt that sort of interest in her which a fine mind always

takes in those on whom some benefit has been conferred. The room in which she was, adjoined that which they had first entered, and was fitted up very neatly, though plainly, as a little sort of drawing-room. The girl herself was seated on a small chintz-covered sofa, with her right arm supported by a cushion, and one small foot resting on a stool. She was certainly exceedingly beautiful, with large dark devoted-looking eyes, and dark eyebrows and eyelashes, but with hair of a light brown, and an exceedingly fair skin. A mixture of races seemed apparent in her; for the hair and complexion of the fair Saxon were blended, yet not inharmoniously, with the dark eyes of more southern lands. Her hand was small and delicate, and her form fine though slight; her dress too, though plain, was very good and ladylike; and everything that they saw was calculated to raise greater surprise in the minds of her visitors that she should be out alone, appa-

rently watching for something upon the high road, in a cold autumnal night.

Gracefully, and with much feeling, she thanked the two gentlemen, and especially the elder, for extricating her from her dangerous and painful situation, and for the kindness and tenderness which they had afterwards shown her. The colour varied a good deal in her cheek as she did so; and having received, in answer to their questions, an assurance that she suffered very little, and that—from the fact of the mass of earth which came down with the wall having diminished the force of the stones—she was uninjured, except inasmuch as her arm was broken, and her left foot somewhat bruised, they took their leave, and departed to resume their journey.

CHAPTER III.

THERE was a small party assembled at a large country house not above three miles, by the high road, from the spot where the last events which I have recorded took place. It was a very extensive and very old-fashioned brick building. Old-fashioned! It is a curious term. The house was little more than a century old; a father might have seen it built, and a son might have heard it called old-fashioned, for the savour of earthly things passes away so rapidly, that what our parents considered the perfection of skill and convenience, we hold to

be but a rude effort towards our own excellence. Yet they were very convenient buildings, those old houses of the reigns of George the First and George the Second; solid in their walls, large and yet secure in their windows, high in their ceilings, broad and low in their staircases, many in their rooms, and strong in their partitions. There was little lath and plaster about them, little tinsel and bright colouring; but there was a sober and a solid grandeur, a looking for comfort rather than finery, of durability rather than cheapness, which made them pleasant to live in, and makes them so even to the present day.

Nothing that tended to comfort was wanting in that house; its solidity seemed to set at defiance wind, and storm, and time; and its wide grates laughed in the face of frost and cold, and bade them get forth, for they could have no abiding there. Turkey carpets covered most of the floors, even of those rooms which, by a law of the Draco-like dictator, Fashion,

are condemned to bear that sort of carpet called Brussels, although the town which has given it name probably never in the world's history produced a rood thereof. The Turks, when they made them, must have marvelled much at what the Christian dogs could want with such large carpets; for the one in the room where the party was assembled—which was called the drawing-room, although it was lined with books — could not have been less than forty feet in length, by thirty in breadth, and yet there was a margin between it and the book-cases. There were four windows on one side of the room, as one looked towards which there was a door on the right hand leading into the library, a door on the left leading into the dining-room, and opposite the windows was another door, which opened into a large vestibule, separated from a stone hall by a screen filled up with glass.

In one of the two fire-places which the room contained was a large blazing fire of wood,

and near it was seated in an arm-chair, reading a book, a very gentlemanly and well-dressed man, a good deal past the middle age, with his feet, warming themselves at the blaze, crossed and elevated upon a low stool. The other fire-place was not so well attended to, but, nevertheless, it was glowing with a tolerable degree of brightness, and near it were seated two young people, amusing themselves, as best they might, during an evening which expectation had rendered somewhat tedious. Sometimes they played at chess together, and laughed and wrangled good humouredly enough; sometimes the one read and the other wrote; sometimes the one drew and the other read; sometimes they talked in low tones, and laughed gaily as they conversed. They were very nearly of an age, that is to say, there was not quite two years' difference between them, but those two years had been so allotted, as, considering their sexes, to make the difference of five or six. The lady was the elder of the

two. She was very nearly approaching one-and-twenty, while the young man was a few months beyond nineteen. They seemed fond of each other, but it was with a fraternal sort of fondness, although they were not brother and sister; and yet, for the young man at least, their near propinquity, and constant communication, had it not been for other circumstances, might have proved dangerous, for certainly a lovelier or more engaging creature has seldom been seen than her with whom he then sat in the unchecked familiarity of near relationship. She was the very opposite, in personal appearance at least, of the girl we have lately spoken of. Her hair could hardly be called black, for in certain lights there was a gleam of rich brown in it, but her eyebrows and eyelashes were as dark as night, and her complexion, though by no means brown in itself, and tinged in the cheeks with the rose, was of that shade which usually accompanies black hair; but her eyes were blue—deep blue, it is

true, so much so, that what with the jetty fringe that surrounded them, and their own depth of hue, many a person thought that they were black. Yet they were blue—very blue, of the colour of an Italian sky when the sun has just gone down beyond the highest hill, and left it full of depth and lustre. In height she was certainly taller than the Venus de Medici; but yet she did not strike one as tall, whether it was from the great symmetry of her figure or some peculiarity in the proportions. But that which most attracted an observer, and especially those that knew her well, was a sparkling variety in the expression of her countenance, and a similar variety in the grace of her movements. When she was reading, or thinking, or writing, or singing, there was an earnestness, a deep tranquillity in her aspect, which would have made one suppose her a being of a very meditative and almost grave disposition; but in conversation, and on all ordinary occasions, the look was quite different,—gay,

sparkling, flashing with cheerfulness and spirit. When she sat still, the lines of her form fell with such easy grace, and seemed so full of tranquil beauty, that any one might have thought that the predominant character was calm repose; but when she moved, especially under any immediate excitement, the light elasticity of every motion changed her at once into a different creature.

Her young companion was very different in every respect. Of a fair and almost feminine complexion, his light hair waved gracefully over a fine high brow, his blue eyes were soft and kindly-looking, and his lips and nose, chiselled with the utmost delicacy, would have suited a woman's face better than a man's. No beard or whiskers as yet gave anything masculine to his countenance, and his slight figure and soft satiny skin made him look still younger than he really was. To look upon him, one would not have supposed that he had seen more than sixteen years of age; and yet under that fair

and delicate form there were many strong and generous impulses, firm and resolute purposes, and even a daring spirit, mingled strangely enough with a tenderness and devotedness seldom found in the grown and experienced man, and a degree of simplicity not at all approaching weakness, but depending upon youth and inexperience.

"I care nothing about it, Edgar," said the lady, in a low tone, in answer to something which the other had said; "he may come and go whenever he pleases, without my ever giving the matter two thoughts. You cannot tease me, cousin, for it is a matter of no interest to me, I can assure you."

"I know better, little heretic," replied her young companion; "you would fain have me believe, Eda, that you are as cold as ice, but I know better. We shall see the fire kindled some day."

"Very likely," said the lady, with a smile; "but you know, Edgar, that even that curious

black stone, which seems to have been especially given to England for the purpose of drying and warming our damp, cold climate—smoking our ceilings and dirtying our hands, is as cold as ice, too, till it is kindled."

"But there may be such things as concealed fires, fair cousin," retorted the young man, with a laugh.

The lady's cheek coloured a little, but she instantly changed the defence into an attack, saying, almost in a whisper, and with a glance to the gentleman reading by the fire, "I know there are, Edgar.—Take care, you bold boy, take care; for if you make war upon me, I shall carry it into your own country."

The young man glanced hastily round him, in the same direction which her eyes had before taken, and his cheek blushed like that of a young girl at the first kiss of love. The lady saw that she had not missed her mark, and maliciously sent another shaft after the first. "Where were you this morning at eight

o'clock?" she said, in the same subdued tone; "and yesterday, and the morning before?—Ah, Master Edgar! do not jest with edged tools, or, at least, learn how to use them better, or you will cut your fingers, dear boy!"

"Hush, hush!" said the young man, in a low voice, and evidently a good deal agitated; "let us make peace, Eda."

"You began hostilities," replied the lady, satisfied that she had got that command of her young companion which ladies do not at all dislike, and by that very means which they are fondest of employing—the possession of a secret.

Almost at the same moment in which she spoke, the older gentleman by the fire laid his book upon his knee, and pulled his watch out of his pocket. "Very extraordinary," he said, turning round his head; "it is nearly ten o'clock—I am glad we dined. You see, Eda, there is no counting upon the motions of young men."

"Especially, my dear uncle," replied the

lady, "when combined with bad roads, bad horses, and high hills. I will answer for it, when Lord Hadley does come, you will have long tales of broken-down hacks, together with abuse of lazy postillions and slow ostlers—But hark! here he comes, or some carriage, at least, for carts are quiet at this time of night."

"And don't dash along the avenue at such a rate," said her cousin Edgar; "it is certainly the ship in sight, and we shall soon see the freight."

The two gentlemen looked towards the door and listened, the lady calmly pursued the task which occupied her, copying some music from a sheet of embossed and pink-edged paper; and one of those little intervals succeeded which take place between the arrival at the door and the appearance in the drawing-room of an expected guest. It lasted a minute, or a minute and a half, for there seemed to be some orders to be given in the passage, and some questions to be asked; and

then the door of the room opened, and a servant, in a well-laced jacket, announced "Lord Hadley" and "Mr. Dudley."

Had any eye watched the lady's countenance, they would certainly have thought that some strong emotion was busy in her heart at that moment, for her cheek first turned very pale, and then glowed warmly; but it might also have been remarked that it was not at the first name that the varying hue became apparent. The second name produced the change, and, at the same time, the pen in her hand dropped upon the music-paper, and blotted out the note she had been just tracing.

At the name of Mr. Dudley, too, an alteration of aspect took place in her uncle, but it was momentary; his brow contracted, his face turned pale, but immediately a placable look returned, and with a courteous smile he advanced to meet the two gentlemen who entered. They were the same whom we have seen upon the road, and in the house of Mr. Clive. The second

of the two, also, I must remark, not to give the reader the trouble of turning back, was the student to whose room at Cambridge I first introduced him.

Lord Hadley, a young, slight, fashionable man, with a good deal of light hair always in high gloss and beautiful order, and a profusion of whisker nicely curled, advanced at once towards the elder gentleman, and shook him heartily by the hand, calling him Sir Arthur Adelon. He then extended his hand to the young gentleman, whom he seemed to know well also, giving, as he did so, a glance, but not one of recognition, towards the face of the lady. Sir Arthur instantly touched his arm gently, and led him up to her, saying, "Eda, my dear, let me introduce to you my friend, Lord Hadley—Lord Hadley, my niece, Miss Brandon."

Lord Hadley bowed, and the lady curtsied gravely; but there was evidently no emotion upon her part, at the introduction. In the

meantime, Mr. Dudley had remained in the most unpleasant occupation in the world—that of doing nothing while other people are taken notice of. A moment after, however, Sir Arthur Adelon turned towards him, and with a courteous though somewhat formal bow, said, "I am very happy to see you, Mr. Dudley; allow me to introduce you to my son and my niece."

"I have already the pleasure of Miss Brandon's acquaintance," said the tutor; and advancing towards her, he shook hands with her warmly. If she really felt any strong emotions at that moment, she concealed them well; and Mr. Dudley, turning again towards the baronet, finished with graceful ease what he had been saying. "I was not at all aware, Sir Arthur, that Miss Brandon was your niece, or it would have added greatly to the pleasure I had in accompanying Lord Hadley, which pleasure is more than perhaps you know, for it affords me the opportunity of ex-

pressing my gratitude to an old friend and benefactor of my poor father."

The gentleman to whom he spoke was evidently embarrassed from some cause, though what that was did not fully appear. His face again turned somewhat pale, and he hesitated in his reply. "Oh! really," he said; "then you are the son of Mr. Dudley, of St. Austin's. Well, I am very happy indeed to see you;" and he shook hands with him, but it was not warmly, adding, as he did so, "but you are late, gentlemen. We waited dinner for you an hour, and had even given up the hope of seeing you to-night."

"I am really very sorry we detained you," replied Lord Hadley; "but we have had two adventures, or, rather, one impediment and one adventure. First, at Dorchester, we found all the post-horses gone to some review, or races, or archery meeting, or one of those many tiresome things, I don't know well what, which

take post-horses away from the places where they ought to be; and then, not far from this place we found a young lady who had contrived to get herself nearly crushed to death under a wall, which had fallen and carried a whole bank of earth along with it."

Instant exclamations of surprise and interest followed; and the young nobleman, who did not dislike attracting a little attention, proceeded with his tale. After describing the spot where they discovered the poor girl, he proceeded, in a frank, dashing way, to say, "She owes her life, in truth, to my friend Dudley; for I, with my usual thoughtlessness, was going to draw her from under the rubbish that had fallen upon her as fast as I could; but he stopped me, showing me that if I attempted it, I should bring down the whole of the rest of the stones; and then he set to work, as if he had been bred an engineer, and secured her against any fresh accident in the first place.

She was not so much hurt as might have been expected, though, I am sorry to say, her poor little arm was broken."

On the old gentleman the tale had produced little impression; in Eda Brandon it had excited feelings of compassion and interest; but it had affected young Edgar Adelon very much more perceptibly. Luckily, no one was looking at him; and he had not voice to attract any attention towards himself by asking even a single question, though there was one he would have given worlds to put.

"But what did you do with her?" demanded Eda Brandon, eagerly. "You should have brought her on here, if the place was not far distant; we could easily have sent for a surgeon, and we would have taken good care of her."

"We knew neither the way nor the distance, Miss Brandon," said Mr. Dudley; "but we did what was probably the best under any circumstances. We took her to her father's house, and Lord Hadley kindly sent on one of

the post-boys to seek for some one to set her arm."

"It is doubtless Helen Clive he speaks of," said a voice just behind Mr. Dudley, so peculiar in its tones, so low, so distinct, so silvery, that no one who heard it once could ever forget it.

Dudley turned quickly round, and beheld a middle-aged man, dressed in a long, straight-cut black coat, with a black handkerchief round his neck, and no shirt-collar apparent. His beard was closely shaved, and looked blue through the pale skin. His eyes were fine, the brow large and fully developed, but the mouth small and pinched, as if that feature, which, together with the eyebrow, is more treacherous in its expression of the passions than any other, was under strong and habitual command. He stooped a little from the shoulders, either from weakness or custom, and indeed he seemed by no means a strong man in frame; but yet there was something firm and resolute in his aspect,

a look of conscious power, as if he had been seldom frustrated in life. The grey eyebrow, too, hanging over the dark eye, and seeming to veil its fire, gave an expression of inquiring perspicacity to the whole face, which impressed one more with the idea of intelligence than of sincerity. No one had seen or heard him enter, except indeed Sir Arthur Adelon, whose face was towards the door, but yet he had been standing close to the rest of the party for two or three minutes, before attention was attracted to himself by the words he uttered.

Lord Hadley turned, as well as his tutor, and looked at the new-comer with some curiosity. "Yes," he replied, "her name was Clive, and I think the old gentleman called her Helen."

"If her name was Clive," rejoined the man whom he had addressed, "it was assuredly Helen Clive; for there is but one Mr. Clive in this neighbourhood, and he has but one child."

"Really, sir, I am delighted to find you

know so much about him," said Lord Hadley; "for both he and his daughter, to tell you the truth, have excited in me a good deal of interest and curiosity."

"Why?" was the stranger's brief question; and it was put in a somewhat dry and unpleasant tone.

"Oh, simply because we found that she had been out upon the high road at nine o'clock at night, sitting under an uncemented stone wall, watching for something or somebody," was the first part of Lord Hadley's reply, for he thought the stranger's tone rather impertinent. "So much for my curiosity," he continued. "Then, as for my interest; in the first place, my dear sir, she was exceedingly pretty; in the next place, wonderfully lady-like, considering the circumstances in which we found her; then, she had broken her arm, which, though perhaps not as poetical as some other accidents, was enough to create some sympathy surely; and, moreover, Dudley found her father

sitting upon the top of the cliff, looking over the sea, with a cocked pistol in his hand."

"As to her beauty," replied the stranger, "with that I have nothing to do. The interest you feel is undoubtedly worthy and well-deserved; and as to the wonder, sir, you may depend upon it, that whatever Helen Clive was doing, she had good reason for doing, and motives which, if she chose to explain them, would quiet your surprise very speedily."

Mr. Dudley, who had taken no part in the conversation, smiled slightly to hear a perfect stranger to Lord Hadley assume at once that tone of calm superiority which he knew was likely to be most impressive with his pupil.

The young nobleman was about to reply, however, when Sir Arthur Adelon interposed, saying, "My lord, I should have introduced to you before now our friend, the Reverend Mr. Filmer—Mr. Filmer, Lord Hadley." The young lord bowed, and the other gentleman advanced a step, when, as he passed, Mr. Dudley per-

ceived that a small spot, about the size of a crown piece, on the top of the head was shaved; and recognising at once the Roman-catholic priest, he gained, with rapid combination, some insight into several things which had before been obscure.

The priest's manner softened. In a few moments, he, with Lord Hadley and their host, were in full conversation; with timid hesitation young Edgar Adelon drew near and joined them; and Dudley, approaching the table near which Miss Brandon was still standing, spoke a few words with her in perhaps a lower tone than is quite customary on ordinary occasions. They neither of them knew that they were speaking low; but the emotions of the heart have immense mastery over the tones of the voice; and though the words that they uttered were little more than common-place sentences of surprise and pleasure at their unexpected meeting, of question and explanation of what had occurred to each since they had

last seen each other, they were certainly both a good deal moved by the unspoken eloquence of the heart. In a short time, just as Lord Hadley was about to retire to his room to put his dress in order, supper was announced, and, postponing his toilet, he offered his arm to Miss Brandon, and led her into the adjacent room. Sir Arthur Adelon and Mr. Dudley followed, and the priest lingered for a moment or two behind, speaking to the baronet's son, and then entered the supper room with a quick step. He then blessed the meal with every appearance of devotion; and Dudley's eye, which was marking much, perceived that Sir Arthur and his son made the sign of the cross, but that Eda Brandon forbore; and he was glad to see it.

The meal became very cheerful as it went on, the first strangeness of new arrival wore off with the two guests. Jest and gaiety succeeded to more serious discourse, and topic after topic was brought forward and cast away again with

that easy lightness which gives a great charm to conversation. The master of the house was somewhat stiff and stately, it is true; but the three young men did not suffer his dignified air to chill them. The priest was a man of great and very various information, had seen, studied, and penetrated not only all the ordinary aspects of society, but the hearts and spirits of thousands of individuals. There was not a subject that he could not talk upon, whether gay or grave, from the green-room of the theatre or opera-house, to the cabinets of statesmen and the saloons of monarchs. His conversation was all graceful, easy, flowing, and becoming; and although there was a point of sarcastic wit in it, which gave it, in the opinion of Dudley, almost too great a piquancy, yet, when that gentleman recollected what had been said, he could not find one word that was unfitted to the character of a well-bred man and a priest. It was all so quietly done too, the stinging gibe, the light and flashing jest, that the young tutor

sometimes thought the whole must have received point and peculiar application from the manner; but yet he could not recollect emphasis laid upon any word; and he carried away from that table, when he retired to rest at night, much matter for thought upon all that he had seen, and many a deep feeling reawakened in his heart, which he had hoped and trusted had been laid asleep by the power of reason, and the struggle of a strong mind against a warm and enthusiastic heart.

CHAPTER IV.

THE wind had blown away the clouds which lay so heavy on the sky the night before. The morning rose bright and sparkling, with a brisk gale stirring the air, and a clear, fresh, frosty look over the whole earth. At an early hour—for matutinal habits had become inveterate—Mr. Dudley rose, and going to the window, gazed out upon a scene of which he had been able to discover little at the dark hour of his arrival.

I will not pause to describe all that he beheld, for the public taste is as capricious in matters of composition as in regard to mere

dress; and the detailed description of scenery, the pictures with the pen, which please much at one time, weary at another. It is a railroad age, too—all the world is anxious to get on, and we hurry past remorselessly all the finer traits of mind and character which were objects of thought and study to our ancestors, just as the traveller, in the long, screaming, groaning, smoking train, is hurried past those sweet and beautiful spots in which the contemplative man of former days was accustomed to pause and ponder.

On one small portion of the landscape, however, I must dwell, for I shall have to speak of it presently, and must recur to it more than once hereafter. The house was situated in an extensive park; and a long avenue of beech trees, not perfectly straight, but sweeping with a graceful curve over the undulations of the ground, led down to the park gates and to the lodge. At a short distance from that lodge, a little thicket or wood joined on to the avenue,

and ran along in irregular masses till it reached the park wall; and these objects—the avenue, the wavy green slopes of the park, the thicket beyond, and the top of the park wall, were those upon which Mr. Dudley's eye first rested. Beyond the limits of the park again, in the same direction, he caught a glimpse of a varied country, apparently tolerably fertile and well-cultivated, close to the park, but growing rapidly wilder and more rude, as it extended into some high and towering downs, which Dudley conceived to be those he had traversed the night before.

As the reader well knows, some kinds of beech tree retain their leaves longer than almost any other tree or shrub, except the tribe of evergreens, and even through frost, and wind, and rain, they hang yellow upon the wintry boughs, till the coming of the new green buds, like ambitious children, forces their predecessors down to the earth. The avenue was thus thickly covered, so that any one might

have walked there long unseen from most parts of the house or park. But when Lord Hadley, on his way back to London from the Continent, had accepted a kind, though not altogether disinterested invitation to Brandon —for so the place was called—he had merely mentioned that his tutor was with him, and to the tutor had been assigned a room considerably higher in the house than the apartments of more lordly guests. Dudley did not feel at all displeased that it should be so; and now as he looked forth, he had a bird's-eye view, as it were, of the avenue, and a fine prospect over the distant country. Thus he was well contented; and as he had been informed that the family did not meet at breakfast till half-past nine, and it was then little more than six, he determined to dress himself at once, and roam for an hour or two through the park, and perhaps extend his excursion somewhat beyond its walls.

One of the first operations in a man's toilet—

I say it for the benefit of ladies, who cannot be supposed to know the mysteries thereof—is to shave himself; and an exceedingly disagreeable operation it is. I know not by what barbarous crotchet it has happened that men have tried to render their faces effeminate, by taking off an ornament and a distinction with which nature decorated them; but so it is, that men, every morning, doom themselves to a quarter of an hour's torture, for the express purpose of making their chins look smug, and as unlike the grown man of God's creation as possible. Dudley's beard was thick and black, and required a good deal of shaving. He therefore opened a very handsome dressing-case—it was one which had been a gift to him in his days of prosperity—and taking out a small finely-polished mirror, he fastened it—for the sake of more light than he could obtain at the looking-glass on the toilet-table—against the left-hand window of the room; then with a little Naples soap, brought by himself from the city of the

syren, a soft badger's-hair brush and cold water, —for he did not choose to ring the servants up at that early hour of the morning—he set to work upon as handsome a face as probably had ever been seen. The brush and the soap both being good, he produced a strong lather, notwithstanding the cold water; and turning to put down the brush and take up the razor which he had laid down on a little table in the window, his eyes naturally fell upon that part of the park grounds beneath him, where the avenue terminated close to the house. As they did so, they rested upon a human figure passing rapidly from the mansion to the shade of the beech trees; and Dudley instantly recognised young Edgar Adelon, the son of his host. There was nothing very extraordinary in the sight; but Dudley was a meditative man by habit, and while he reaped the sturdy harvest of his chin, he went on thinking of Edgar Adelon, his appearance, his character, his conversation; and then his mind turned from the youth to another

subject, near which it had been fluttering a great deal both that morning and the night before, and settled upon Eda Brandon. Whatever was the course of his meditations, it produced a sigh, which is sometimes like a barrier across a dangerous road, giving warning not to proceed any farther in that direction.

He then gazed out of the window again, and following with his eyes the course of the avenue, he once more caught sight of the young gentleman he had just seen, hurrying on as fast as he could go. He had no gun with him, no dogs; and a slight degree of curiosity was excited in the tutor's mind, which he would have laughed at had it been anything but very slight. Shortly after, he lost sight of the figure, which, as it seemed to him, entered the thicket on the right hand of the avenue; and Dudley thought to himself, "Poor youth! he seemed, last night, though brilliant and imaginative enough at times, sadly absent, and even sad at others. He is gone, perhaps, to meditate over his love;

ay, he knows not how many more pangs may be in store for him, or what may be the dark turn of fate near at hand. I was once as prosperous and as fair-fortuned as himself, and now——"

He would not go on, for it was a part of his philosophy—and it was a high-minded one—never to repine. As he passed to and fro, however, in the room, he looked from time to time out of the window again; and just as he was putting on his coat, he suddenly saw a figure emerge from the thicket where it approached closest to the park wall, beheld it climb easily over the boundary, as if by a stile or ladder, and disappear. At that distance, he could not distinguish whether the person he saw was Edgar Adelon or not; but he thought the whole manœuvre strange, and was meditating over it, with his face turned to the window, when he heard a knock at his door, and saying, "Come in," was visited by the Reverend Mr. Filmer.

The priest advanced with a calm, gentlemanly smile and quiet step, saying, " I heard you moving in your room, Mr. Dudley, which adjoins mine, and came in to wish you good morning, and to say that if I can be of any service in pointing out to you the objects of interest in this neighbourhood, of which there are several, I shall be most happy. Also in my room I have a very good, though not very extensive, collection of books, some of great rarity; and though I suppose we are priests of different churches, you are too much a man of the world, I am sure, to suffer that circumstance to cause any estrangement between us."

" It could cause none, my dear sir," replied Dudley, " even if your supposition were correct; but I am not an ecclesiastic, and I can assure you I view your church with anything but feelings of bigotry; and, indeed, regret much that the somewhat too strict definitions of the Council of Trent have placed a barrier

between the two churches which cannot be overleaped."

"Strict definitions are very bad things," said the priest; "they are even contrary to the order of nature. In it there are no harsh lines of division, but every class of beings in existence, all objects, all tones, glide gradually into each other, softened off, as if to show us that there is no harshness in God's own works. It is man makes divisions, and bars himself out from his fellow men."

Dudley did not dislike the illustration of his new acquaintance's views; but he remarked that he did not touch upon any definite point, but kept to generals; and having no inclination himself for religious discussions, he thanked Mr. Filmer again for his kindness, and asked him if there were any objects of particular interest within the limits of a walk before breakfast.

"One which for me has much interest," replied the priest—"the ruins of a priory, and

of the church once attached to it, which lie just beyond the park walls. I am ready to be your conductor this moment, if you please."

Dudley expressed his willingness to go; Mr. Filmer got his hat, and in a few minutes they issued forth into the fresh air.

Taking their way to the right, they left the avenue of trees upon the other hand; and, by a well-worn path over the grassy slopes of the park, they soon reached the wall, over which they passed by a stone stile, and then descended a few hundred yards into a little wooded dell, with a very bright but narrow stream running through it. A well-trimmed path through the copse brought them, at the end of five minutes more, to an open space bosomed in the wood, where stood the ruin. It was a fine specimen, though much decayed, of that style of architecture which is called Norman; a number of round arches, and deep, exquisitely chiselled mouldings, were still in good preservation; and pausing from time to time to look

and admire, Dudley was led on by his companion to what had been the principal door of the church, the tympanum over which was quite perfect. It was highly enriched with rude figures; and the tutor gazed at it for some time in silence, trying to make out what the different personages represented could be about. Mr. Filmer suffered him, with a slight smile, to contemplate it uninterruptedly, for some time; but at length he said, "It is a very curious piece of sculpture that. If you remark, on the right hand side there is represented a hunt, with the deer flying before the hounds, and a number of armed men on horseback following. Then in the next compartment you see dogs and men again, and a man lying transfixed by a javelin."

"But the third is quite a different subject," said Dudley—"a woman, seemingly singing and playing on a harp, with a number of cherubim round her, and an angel holding a phial; and the fourth compartment is different

also, showing two principal figures embracing in the midst of several others, apparently mere spectators."

"It is, nevertheless, all one story," said the priest; "and is, in fact, the history of the foundation of this church and priory, though connected with a curious legend attached to three families in this neighbourhood, of each of which you know something. I will tell it to you as we return; but first let us go round to the other side, where there is a fragment of a very beautiful window."

Dudley was not content without exploring the whole of the ruin; but when that was done, they turned back towards the park again, and Mr. Filmer began his tale:—

"Nearly where the existing house stands," he said, "stood formerly Brandon castle, the lord of which, it would appear, was a rash, impetuous man, given much to those rude sports which, in the intervals of war, were the chief occupations of our old nobility. In the neigh-

bourhood there was a family of knightly rank, of the name of Clive, the head of which, in the wars of Stephen and Matilda, had saved the life of the neighbouring baron, and became his dearest, though comparatively humble friend. The lord of Brandon, though not altogether what may be called an irreligious man, was notorious for scoffing at the church and somewhat maltreating ecclesiastics. He had conceived a passion for a lady named Eda Adelon, the heiress of some large estates at the distance of about thirty miles from this place, and had obtained a promise of her hand; but upon one occasion, he gave her so great offence in regard to an abbey which she had aided principally in founding, that she refused to ratify the engagement, and entered into the sisterhood herself, telling him that the time would come when he, too, would found monasteries, and perhaps have recourse to her prayers. Five or six years passed afterwards, and the baron himself, always irascible and vehement, became more

so from the disappointment he had undergone. The only person who seemed to have any power over him, and that was the power which a gentle mind sometimes exercises upon a violent one, was his companion, the young Sir William Clive. Hunting was, as I have said, his favourite amusement; and on one occasion he had pursued a stag for miles through the country, always baffled by the swiftness and cunning of the beast. He had thrown a number of javelins at it, always believing he was sure of his mark; but still the beast reappeared unwounded, till at length it took its way down the very glen where Brandon priory stands, and then entered the thicket, just as the baron was close upon its track. Fearing to lose it again, he threw another spear, with angry vehemence, exclaiming, with a fearful oath, 'I will kill something this time!' A faint cry immediately followed, and the next instant Sir William Clive staggered forth from the wood, transfixed by his friend's javelin, and fell, to all

appearance dying, at the feet of the baron's horse. You have now the explanation of the first two compartments; I will proceed to give you that of the two others. The great lord was half frantic at the deed that he had done; the wounded man was taken up and carried to the castle; skilful leeches were sent for, but employed their art in vain; the young knight lay speechless, senseless, with no sign of life but an occasional deep-drawn breath and a slight fluttering of the heart. At length, one of the chirurgeons, who was an ecclesiastic, ventured to say, 'I know no one who can save him, if it be not the abbess Eda.' Now, Eda Adelon had by this time acquired the reputation of the highest sanctity, and she was even reported to have worked miracles in the cure of the sick and the infirm. Filled with anguish for his friend, and remorse for what he had done, the baron instantly mounted his horse, and rode, without drawing a rein, to the abbey, where he was admitted to the presence of the

abbess, and casting himself upon his knees before her, told the tale of his misadventure. 'Kneel to God, and not to me, Lord Brandon,' said the abbess; 'humble your heart, and pray to the Almighty. Perchance he will have compassion on you.'

"'Pray for me,' said the baron; 'and if your prayers are successful, Eda, I vow by Our Lady and all the saints, to lead a new and altered life for the future, and to found a priory where my poor friend fell, and there twelve holy men shall day and night say masses in commemoration of the mercy shown to me.'

"'I will pray for you,' replied the abbess; 'wait here awhile; perchance I may return with good tidings.'

"While left alone, the baron heard a strain of the most beautiful and solemn music, and the exquisite voice of the abbess Eda singing an anthem; and at the end of about an hour she returned to him, carrying a phial of precious medicine, which she directed him to give

to his friend as soon as he reached his castle. The legend goes, that the phial had been brought down to her by an angel, in answer to her prayers; but certain it is, the moment the medicine was administered to the wounded man, his recovery commenced, and he was soon quite restored to health. The baron did not forget his vow, but built the priory where you have seen the ruins; and, in commemoration of the event, caused the tympanum you have examined to be chiselled by a skilful mason. We find, moreover, that he bestowed the hand of his only sister upon the young Sir William Clive; and the malicious folks of the day did not scruple to affirm that the young lady had been walking in the wood with the gallant knight at the very moment when he received the wound."

The priest ended with a quiet smile, and Dudley replied, with that sort of interest which an imaginative man always takes in a legend

of this kind, "I do not wonder that where there are such tales connected with a family, it clings to the old faith with which they are bound up, in spite of all the changes that go on around."

"Alas! in this instance, my dear sir," replied the priest, "such has not been the case. The Adelons and the Clives, it is true, have remained attached to the church; the Brandons have long abandoned her. Even this fair girl, Sir Arthur's niece, has been brought up in your religion—" he paused a moment, and then added, with a sigh—"and continues in it."

Dudley could not say that he was sorry to hear it; but he was spared the necessity of making any reply by the approach of another person, in whom he instantly recognised the father of the girl whom he had aided to rescue from extreme peril the evening before. "Ah! Mr. Clive," he said, as the other drew near, "I am very happy to see you; I should have

come down during the morning to inquire after your daughter. I trust that she has not suffered much, and that you got a surgeon speedily."

"In about two hours, my lord," said Clive; "country doctors are not always readily to be found; but the delay did no harm; the broken arm was set easily enough, and my poor girl is none the worse for what has happened, except inasmuch as she will have to go one-handed about the world for the next month or so."

"You have mistaken me for the gentleman who was with me, Mr. Clive," said Dudley; "he was Lord Hadley; I am a very humble individual, having neither rank nor honours."

"The nobility of the heart, sir, and the honours which are given unasked to a high mind," replied Clive. "I know not why, but both my daughter and myself fancied that you were the nobleman, and the other was a friend."

"The very reverse," answered Dudley; "he is the nobleman, I am merely his tutor."

The old man mused for a minute or two.

very profoundly, and said at length, "Well, I suppose it is all just and right in the sight of the great Distributor of all gifts and honours; but I beg your pardon, sir, for giving you a title that is not your due, which I know is a greater offence when it is too high than when it is too low. Against the one offence, man is sheltered by his pride; to the other, he is laid open by his vanity. Mr. Filmer, I should like to speak a word with you, if possible."

"Certainly," said the priest, "certainly; if you will walk on, Mr. Dudley, for a very short way, I will talk to Mr. Clive, and overtake you immediately. I beg pardon for our scanty expedition; after breakfast, or in the evening, we will take a longer ramble."

Dudley bowed and walked on, with very little expectation, to say the truth, of being rejoined by the priest before he reached the house; but he miscalculated, for five minutes had hardly passed, when, with his peculiarly quiet step, rapid but silent, Mr. Filmer rejoined

him. Dudley had clearly comprehended from the first that Mr. Filmer was a man likely to be deeply acquainted with the affairs of all the Roman-catholic families in the neighbourhood. There is one great inconvenience attending the profession of the Roman-catholic faith, in a country where the great bulk of the population is opposed to it. The nearest priest must be the depositary of the secrets of all; and it must depend upon the honesty with which they are kept, whether the private affairs of every family are, or are not, bruited about through the whole adjacent country. In lands where the population is principally papistical, such is not the case; for the numbers of the priesthood divide the secrets of the population, and it rarely happens that one man has enough to make it worth his while to talk of the concerns of the families with which he is connected, even were not his lips closed upon the weightier matters by the injunctions of the church. Dudley was somewhat curious to have an ex-

planation of the circumstances in which he had found both Clive and his daughter on the preceding evening; but a feeling of delicacy made him forbear from putting any question to Mr. Filmer upon the subject, and as they walked on to the house he merely remarked, "I suppose this gentleman whom we have lately seen is a descendant of the person mentioned in your legend?"

"From father to son direct," replied the priest. "It is but little known how much noble blood there is to be found amongst what is called the yeomanry of England. If the old Norman race were still considered worthy of respect, many a proud peer would stand unbonneted before the farmer. But Mr. Clive cultivates his own land, as was done in days of yore."

"I should almost have imagined," said Dudley, with a laugh, "from the spot and manner in which I found him last night, that he added other occupations, probably, if less noble, not less ancient."

Mr. Filmer turned and gazed at him with a look of some surprise; but he made no reply, and as they were by this time near the house, the conversation dropped entirely.

CHAPTER V.

With a quick step Edgar Adelon pursued his way along the avenue, through the thicket, by the paths which he knew well, and over the wall of the park by the stones built into it to form a stile; but it was the eager beating of his heart which made his breath come fast and thick, and not the rapidity with which his young limbs moved. He knew not that he was observed by any one; and with that intensity of feeling which few are capable of, and which, perhaps, few for their own happiness should desire, his whole mind and thoughts

were filled with one subject, so that he could give no heed to anything that passed around him. He walked on down a very narrow, shady lane—which led, by a much shorter way than had been taken by the carriage of Lord Hadley the night before, to the house of Mr. Clive—and was entering a meadow upon the side of the hill, without observing that any one was near, when suddenly a voice called him by name, and turning, he beheld the tall old man himself, and instantly advanced towards him, and grasped his hand eagerly.

"How is Helen?" he said—"how is Miss Clive? Lord Hadley and Mr. Dudley told us of the accident last night, and I have been in a fever to hear more of her ever since. They said she was not much hurt; I hope it is so, but I must go down and see her."

The old man had gazed at him while he spoke with a fixed, steadfast look, full of interest, but in some degree sad. "She is not much hurt, Edgar," he answered; "her arm is

broken, but that will soon be well. Otherwise she is uninjured. But, my dear boy, what are you doing? This cannot go on. You may go down to-day and see her, for you would not pain her, or injure her, I know; but you must tell your father that you have been. That I insist upon, or I do not let you go."

"I will, I will!" answered Edgar Adelon; "surely that will satisfy you.—Injure her! I would not for the world—no, not for anything on earth."

"Well, if your father knows it, Edgar, I have nought to say," rejoined the old man; "and I will trust to your word that you do tell him. That which he does with his eyes open is his fault, not ours. All I say is, I will have no deceit."

"You will hear from himself that I have told him," replied the young man, with a glowing cheek; "but mark me, Clive, I do not always say when I go to your house, any more than when I go to other places. If the

occasion requires it, I speak; but if not, I am silent."

Clive again looked at him steadfastly, as if he were about to add something more in a grave tone; but then suddenly laying his hand upon his shoulder, he gave him a friendly shake, saying, "Well, boy, well!" and turned away and left him.

Edgar Adelon pursued his course with a well-pleased smile and a light step. His conversation with Clive was a relief to him; it was something which he had long seen must come, which he had dreaded, and it was now over. Five minutes brought him in sight of the house towards which his steps were bent; and he paused for a moment, with joyful beating of the heart, to look at it, as it stood rising out of its trees upon the opposite side of the dell, as if it were perched upon the top of a high cliff overhanging the valley; though, in truth, beneath the covering of the wood was stretched a soft and easy descent, with manifold walks and

paths leading to the margin of the little stream.

It is no unpleasant thing to pause and gaze into the sparkling wine of the cup of joy before we quaff it: and such was the act of Edgar Adelon at that moment, although his whole heart was full of those tremulous emotions which are only combined with the intense and thirsty expectation of youth. Then with a wild bound he darted down the road, crossed the little bridge, and ran up the opposite slope. He entered the yard of the building at once; and no dogs barked at him. A small terrier came and wagged his tail, and the great mastiff crept slowly out of his kennel, and stretched himself in the morning sunshine. Edgar Adelon must have been often there before. He walked into the house, too, without ceremony, and his question to the first woman servant he met was, "Where is Helen?" but he corrected it instantly into "Where is Miss Clive?"

The woman smiled archly, and told him

where she was, and a moment after, Edgar was seated beside her on a sofa in the little drawing room which I have described. I do not know that it would be altogether fair or just to detail all that passed between them; but certainly Edgar's arm stole round the beautiful girl's waist, and he gazed into her dark eyes and saw the light of love in them. He made her tell him all that happened—that is to say, all that she chose to tell; for she refused to say how or why she was out, watching upon the road, at a late hour of the evening. He was of a trustful heart, however, and when she first answered, with a gay look, "I went to meet a lover, to be sure, Edgar," he only laughed, and kissed her cheek, saying, "You cannot make me jealous, Helen."

"That is, I suppose, because you do not love me sufficiently," said Helen Clive.

"No, love," he replied, "it is because I esteem you too much." And then he went on to make, her tell him when the surgeon had

arrived, and whether the setting of her arm had pained her much, and whether she was quite, quite sure that she was not otherwise hurt.

"My foot, a little," replied his fair companion; "it is somewhat swelled; don't you see, Edgar?" And he knelt down to look, and kissed it with as much devotion as ever a pilgrim of his own faith kissed the slipper of the Pope.

Then came the account of her deliverance from the perilous situation in which she had been found. "Do you know," she said, "if I had not been a great deal frightened and a little hurt, I could have laughed as I lay; for it was more ridiculous than anything else to feel one's self half buried in that way, and not able to move in the least. Luckily, it was the earth fell upon me first, and then the stones upon that, so that I could only move my arms; and when I tried to do that, it instantly set some of the stones rolling again, by which my

poor arm was broken; so then I lay quite still, thinking some one must come by, sooner or later, till I heard a carriage coming up the hill, and saw, by the light of the lamps, two gentlemen walking fast before it. I called to them as loud as I could, and they both ran up. The one was kind enough, and was going to pull me out at once; but if he had done so, most likely he and I and his companion would have been all killed, or very much hurt. The other, however, stopped him, and kindly and wisely and gently secured all the fragments of the wall that were still hanging over, so that he could get me out without danger; and then he lifted off the stones one by one, and he, and the servants, and the other gentleman removed the weight of earth and lifted me up; and all the time he spoke so kindly to me, and comforted and cheered me so that I shall always feel grateful to him till the last day of my life."

"And so shall I, my sweet Helen," said

Edgar Adelon, eagerly; "but which was it, the dark one or the fair one?"

"Oh, the dark one," replied Helen Clive; "the tallest of the two. I think the post-boy told my father that it was Lord Hadley."

"No, no," said her lover; "the fair one is Lord Hadley, the dark one is Mr. Dudley, his tutor, and I am glad of it; first, because I like him best, and secondly, because I am more likely with him to have an opportunity of showing my gratitude for what he has done for you, dear girl. If ever I have, I shall not forget it, Helen."

"You must not, and you will not, I am sure, Edgar," answered Helen Clive. "I think that men's characters and nature are often shown more by the manner in which they do a thing, than by the act itself; and though I felt grateful enough for deliverance, yet I will confess I felt more grateful still for the kind and gentle way in which he spoke to me, asked if I

were much hurt, told me not to be frightened, that they would soon release me; and still, while he used the very best means of extricating me, kept talking cheerfully to me all the time."

"God bless him!" said Edgar Adelon; "I shall love that man, I am sure."

"Then, too," continued Helen, "when they had put me in the carriage, and we had gone about half a mile over the down, I asked them to stop and let one of their servants go and tell my father what had happened to me; and the young light-haired one called to a servant he named 'Müller,' to go; but the other said, 'No, no! I will go myself. The man might only frighten your father;' and he opened the carriage door and jumped out, as if he had a real pleasure in doing all he could for a poor girl whom he had never seen before, and a man whom he had never seen at all."

"That is the true spirit of a gentleman," said Edgar—"a better coronet, my Helen,

than gilded leaves and crimson velvet can make. But now tell me more about yourself. When does the surgeon say your arm will be well, and when can you come out again to take a morning's walk?"

"I can walk quite well," answered Helen Clive; "my foot and ancle are a little bruised, but that is all. As for my arm, it may be six weeks, or two months, Mr. Sukely says, before I can use it; so no more playing upon the guitar, Edgar, for a long time."

"Well, we must have patience," answered Edgar Adelon. "It is pleasant, my Helen, to hear you make sweet music, as the poet calls it, and warble like a bird in spring; but yet I do not know that the best harmony to my ear is not to hear the spoken words of that dear tongue in the tones of love and confidence. But come, we will have our morning walk; the brightest hour of all my day is that between seven and eight."

"I will get my bonnet on, and come," an-

swered Helen; and she left the room for the purpose she mentioned.

Edgar, in the meanwhile left alone, gazed for a moment or two at the pages of the book she had been reading, and was writing a lover's comment in the margin, when one of the doors of the room opened, and he started up, thinking that Helen had returned prepared. He was surprised, however, to see a tall, powerful, broad-shouldered man of about forty, well-dressed, and having the appearance of a gentleman. His face, however, though intelligent, was not altogether pleasant in expression; the head was round, the forehead square-cut and massive, the jaw-bone large and angular, the eyes grey, but sharp and flashing, the eyebrows bushy and overhanging, and the greyish red hair cut short, and standing stiff and bristly, while enormous whiskers of the same hue almost concealed each cheek. The young gentleman, it is true, got but an imperfect view of him; for the intruder withdrew as

soon as he saw that there was any one in the room, and closed the door. Edgar felt somewhat surprised and curious, for he had never before seen any one in Mr. Clive's house at that hour of the morning but himself, his servants and labouring men, and Helen; and with the rapid divination of thought, he at once connected the appearance of this stranger with the events of the night before. He had not much time for reflection before Helen Clive returned; but then he instantly told her what had occurred, and inquired who the visitor was.

"Ask no questions, Edgar," replied Helen, "or put them to my father; but at all events, do not mention to any one else, I beseech you, that you have seen such a person here."

Edgar mused, and walked out with her, perhaps in a more meditative mood than he had ever experienced in the society of Helen Clive before. It soon passed away, however, and they wandered on, side by side as usual, in conversation too deeply interesting to them to

be very interesting to a reader of a work like this; but all bright things will come to an end, and that sweet hour, which perhaps they too often indulged in, terminated all too soon; and the impassioned boy took his way back to Brandon full of wild and glittering visions of love and happiness. He had somewhat outstayed his time; and when he reached the house, he found the whole party sitting down to breakfast.

"Why, why, where have you been, Edgar?" asked Sir Arthur; "you have been an early wanderer."

"Oh! I often am," answered Edgar; but remembering his promise to Mr. Clive, he added, "I have been down to Knights-hyde grange, to see poor Helen Clive, after the accident of last night."

Sir Arthur Adelon seemed neither surprised nor displeased. "How is she?" he inquired. "Not much hurt, I hope?"

"Not much," replied Edgar, encouraged by

his father's manner; "the dear girl's arm is broken, and her foot a little bruised, but that is all." His cheek flushed a little as he ended, for he saw not only the deep blue eyes of his beautiful cousin fixed upon him, but those of the priest also.

Sir Arthur took no notice, however, but merely said, "Did you see Mr. Clive, also?"

"Yes, I met him," replied the young man; "he was coming up this way."

"I must see him to-day, myself," said the baronet; "and I suppose, in gallantry, I ought to go down and ask after your fair playfellow, too, Edgar;" and turning towards Lord Hadley, he added, "They were children together, and many a wild race have they had in the park, when my poor brother-in-law Brandon was alive. Clive and he were related; for there is no better blood in the country than that which flows in the veins of this same farmer-looking man whom you met last night."

"Let us all go down and visit them, my dear uncle," said Eda Brandon; "I have not seen Helen for a long time."

The party was agreed upon, and the breakfast proceeded; but to one at least there present, the cheerful morning meal seemed not a pleasant one. Mr. Dudley ate little, and said less; and yet there seemed to be no great cause for the sort of gloom that hung upon him. Everybody treated him with the utmost courtesy and kindness; he was seated next to Sir Arthur Adelon, between him and Mr. Filmer. Lord Hadley, in his good-humoured way, never seemed to look upon him as the tutor, but called him on more than one occasion, "My friend Dudley;" and there was a warmth, mingled with reverence, in the manner of young Edgar Adelon, when he spoke to him, which must have been gratifying.

Could the cause of the sort of melancholy which affected him, be the fact that Lord Hadley was seated next to Eda Brandon, and that his

eyes and his manner told, he thought her very beautiful?

However that might be, as soon as breakfast was over, and the party rose, Dudley retired at once to his room, and when he had closed the door, he stood for a moment with his hands clasped together, gazing on the floor. "This is worse than vain," he said, at length; "this is folly—this is madness. Would to God I had not come hither; but I must crush it out, and suffer myself to be no longer the victim of visionary hopes, which have no foundation to rest upon, and feelings which can never be gratified, and which it is madness to indulge." He sat himself down to read, but his mind had lost its usual power, and he could not bend his thoughts to the task. Perhaps three quarters of an hour had passed, when some one knocked at his door, and Edgar Adelon came in.

"They are all ready to go, Mr. Dudley," he said. "Will you not come with us?"

"I think not," replied Dudley; "I am not in a very cheerful mood. This day is an anniversary of great misfortunes, Mr. Adelon, and it is not fair to cloud other people's cheerfulness with my grave face."

"Oh! cast away sad thoughts," said Edgar; "if they are of the past, they are but shadows; if they are of the future, they are morning clouds."

"Clouds that may be full of storms," replied Dudley, sadly.

"Who can tell?" cried the young man, enthusiastically; "and if they be, how often do the rain-drops of adversity water the field, and advance the harvest of great future success. I have read it, I have heard of it, I am sure that it is true. Come, Mr. Dudley, come; for the man who gives himself up to sorrow, makes a league with a fiend when there is an angel waiting for him. Hope is energy, energy is life, life is happiness if it is rightly used. We wound the bosom of the earth to produce fruits

and flowers, and Heaven sometimes furrows the heart with griefs to produce a rich crop of joys hereafter."

Dudley grasped his hand warmly. "Thanks, thanks, my young friend," he said; "I will come. I certainly did not think to receive such bright lessons, and such wise ones, from one so young."

"The philosophy of youth," answered Edgar, with a laugh, "is, I believe, the best, for it is of God's implanting. It is an instinct to be happy; and where is the reason that is equal to instinct?"

"Nowhere," answered Dudley, taking his hat, with a smile; "and I will follow mine."

CHAPTER VI.

I WILL beg leave with the reader to precede the party which was just setting out from Brandon, and to give one more scene at the house of Mr. Clive, which took place shortly before their arrival.

About a quarter of an hour after Edgar had turned his steps homeward, Mr. Clive entered the room where Helen was sitting, and placed himself in a chair opposite to her. But upon Helen's part there was nothing like a bashful consciousness; she had been accustomed to her lover's coming and going for years; their

mutual affection had sprung up so gradually, or rather, had developed itself so easily, that she could hardly mark the time when they had not loved; there had been none of those sudden changes which startle timid passion, and neither her father nor Sir Arthur Adelon had ever shown any of that apprehension, in regard to their frequent meeting, which might have created anxiety, if not fear, in her own breast. She therefore looked up frankly in her father's face, and said, "Edgar has been here, my dear father, and unfortunately Mr. Norries opened the door and came in while he was in the room; but I am sure there is no cause for apprehension, for I begged Edgar not to speak of it to any one, and he gave me his word that he would not."

Mr. Clive cast down his eyes, and thought for several minutes without reply. But he then murmured some words more to himself than to his daughter, saying, "That is bad—that is unfortunate;—not that I doubt Edgar, my Helen;

but I must speak with Norries about; it for he is somewhat rash, and he may show himself to others not so much to be trusted. That I do trust Edgar you may well judge, my dear child, otherwise he would not be so often here."

He spoke, gazing at his daughter with a look of some anxiety, and with the white eyebrows drawn far over the eyes. "I know not that I am right, my Helen," he added; "I almost begin to fear not. I feel I should only be doing right if I were to bid this youth make his visits fewer and shorter; and yet I would not pain him for a great deal, for he is kind, and good, and honest—but it must come to that in the end, Helen."

"Oh! no, my father, no," cried Helen Clive, imploringly. "Why should you do that?"

"Listen to me, Helen," said her father; "you have not thought of these things fully. He loves you, Helen."

"I know it," cried Helen Clive, with the ingenuous blood mounting into her cheek—"I

know it, and I love him; but why should that prevent him from coming—why should that deprive us of the very happiness which such love gives?"

"Because it cannot be happy, my Helen," answered her father; "because he is a gentleman of high degree, and you the daughter of no better than a yeoman."

"My father," said Helen, rising, and laying the hand that was uninjured on her father's arm, "have I not heard you say that the blood of the yeoman Clive is as pure as that of the noble house of Adelon, and perhaps of older strain? Is not the land you cultivate your own, as much or more than his that he farms to others? There is not that difference between us that should be reasonably any bar; but even suppose it were so, what could you seek by separating us?"

"Your own happiness, my child," answered Clive, gravely.

"By making us both miserable some years,

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"By making us both miserable some years,

months, or weeks, before we otherwise might be so," rejoined Helen, eagerly; "that is all that can be done now. We love as much as we can love, and so long as we are doing nought that is wrong, violating no duty to you, or to his father, surely we may enjoy the little portion of happiness that is sure, and leave to the future and God's good will the rest."

She spoke eagerly, and with her colour heightened, her eye full of light, and her beautiful lips quivering in their vehemence; and Clive could not help feeling a portion of a father's pride rise up and take part with her. He could not but say to himself, as he gazed at her in her beauty, "She is worthy to be the bride of the greatest lord in all the land."—"Well, Helen, well," he said, using an expression which was habitual to him, "I must trust you both; but remember, my child, in making over to you the care of your own happiness, I put mine under your guardianship also, for mine is wrapped up in yours. But hark! there

is Norries pacing to and fro above. I must go and speak with him. That wild spirit will not brook its den much longer." And walking to the door, he mounted the stairs to the room, which was just over that where he had been sitting.

"Ah! you are come back at last, Clive," said the strong, hard-featured man whom I have before described. "Well, what have you heard? —were all those movements that alarmed you so much last night but mere idle rumour?"

"No," answered Clive; "but I find you were not the object. A party of smugglers was taken farther down the coast, and the intimation which the officer so mysteriously hinted to me they had received, referred to that affair."

"To be sure," replied his companion; "they all think me in the United States. No one but yourself has ever known that I was in France the while."

"I can't help thinking, my good friend," replied Clive, "that it might have been better for

you to have stayed there. You know you are in jeopardy here, and may be recognised at any moment."

"Well, well, Clive," answered his companion, "I will not jeopardise you long; it is my intention to go on this very night, so do not be alarmed. I thank you much for what you have done, which is as much or more than I could expect, and am only sorry that poor Helen has been injured in my cause."

Clive looked at him steadfastly for a moment or two, with his usual calm, steady, grave expression of countenance, and then replied, with a faint smile, "It is curious, Norries, how, whenever men are blamed by their best friends for a foolish action when it is committed, or warned against a rash action which they are determined to commit, they always affect to believe that there is some personal feeling actuating their counsellor, and persuade themselves that his advice is not good, not by trying it on the principles of reason, but by their own preju-

dices. I have no personal fears in the matter; I anticipate no danger to myself or to my family; neither should you think so. Last night I was ready to have shed my blood to insure your safety, which I certainly should not have been likely to do if I were a man full of the cold calculations you suppose——"

"Well, well, well, Clive," said Norries, interrupting him, "I was wrong, I was wrong—think of it no more; but one meets so much cold calculation in this life, that one's heart gets chilled to one's best friends. My coming might, indeed, as you say, be what the world would call rash; but every attempt must be estimated by its object, and till you know mine, do not judge me hastily. Where I was wrong, was in not giving you sufficient intimation of my intention, that you might have prepared and let me know when I could land without risk; but the man I sent over to you was delayed one whole day for a passage, and that day made a great difference."

"It did," answered Clive; "for I had barely time to send my own two men away to a distance, and get others, in whom I could better trust, to help me. I had no means either of giving you warning that there was a great movement at Barhampton, and that the officers were evidently on the look out for some one on the coast. You only said that you would land in the cove between nine and ten, and that I must show a light due east of the cove mouth to guide you, as there was no moon. I had nothing for it, therefore, but to make ready against attack, in order that you might get back to the boat if you were the person these men were looking for. But now, Norries, I am very anxious to hear what is your object, for it should be a great one to induce you to undertake such a risk."

"It is a great one," answered Norries, with his grey eyes flashing under his contracted brow—"no less than the salvation of my country, Clive. In that last affair, the rash

fools of the manufacturing districts hurried on, against all persuasion, before matters were half ripe, with the light spirit of the old Gauls—firm in the onset, daunted by the first check, and tame and crouching in defeat. Had they behaved like men, I would have remained with them to the last, to perish or to suffer; but there was no shame in abandoning men who abandoned their own cause at the very first frown of fortune. Now there is a brighter prospect before me and before England. There are sterner, calmer, more determined spirits, ready and willing to dig a mine beneath the gaudy fabric of corruption and tyranny which has been built up by knavish statesmen in this land, and to spring the mine when it is dug. The boasted constitution of England, which protects and nurses a race of privileged tyrants, and refuses justice—aye, and almost food—to the great mass of the people, is like one of the feudal castles of the old barons of the land, built high and strong, to protect them in their aggressions

upon their neighbours, and in their despotic rule over their serfs. But there have been times in this and other lands when the serfs, driven to madness by unendurable tyranny, have, with the mattock and the axe of their daily toil, dug beneath the walls of the stronghold, and cast it in ruins to the ground. So will we, Clive—so will we!"

Clive crossed his arms upon his chest, and gazed at him with a thoughtful and a melancholy look; and when he had done, he shook his head sadly, as if his mind could take no part in the enthusiastic expectations of his companion.

"Why do you shake your head, Clive?" demanded Norries, impatiently.

"Because I have lived long enough, my good friend," replied Clive, "to see some hundreds of these schemes devised, perfected, executed, and every one has brought ruin upon the authors, and worked no amelioration in the institutions of the land."

"Simply because men are tame under injuries; simply because they submit to injustice; simply because, out of every ten men in the land, there is not one who has a just notion of the dignity of man's nature, or a just appreciation of man's rights," was the eager reply of Norries. "But their eyes have been opened, Clive; the burden is becoming intolerable; the very efforts that have been made, and the struggles that have been frustrated, have taught our fellow countrymen that there is something to struggle for, some great object for endeavour. They have asked themselves, what? and we have taught them. One success—only one great success, and the enormous multitude of those who are justly discontented with the foul and corrupt system which has been established, but who have been daunted by repeated failures, will rise as one man, and claim that which is due to the whole human race, sweeping away all obstacles with the might and the majesty of a torrent. You, Clive, you, I am sure,

are not insensible to the wrongs which we all suffer."

"I am neither unaware that there are many evils tolerated by law, nor many iniquities sanctioned by law," replied Clive, "nor insensible to the necessity of their removal; but at the same time, I am fully convinced that there is a way by which they can be removed—and that the only way in which they ever will be removed—without violence or bloodshed, or the many horrors and disasters which must always accompany anything like popular insurrection. When the people of England think fit to make their voice heard—I mean the great mass of the people—that voice is strong enough to sweep away, slowly but surely, every one of the wrongs of which we have cause to complain."

"But how can it make itself heard, that voice of the people of England?" demanded Norries; "where can it make itself heard? The people of England—the many, the multitude, the strength of the land, the labouring poor—have

no voice in the senate, at the bar, on the bench. The church of the majority is the rich man's church, the law of the land is the rich man's law, the parliament of the country is the rich man's parliament. But it is vain talking with you of such things now; but come and hear us for one single night—hear our arguments, hear our resolutions, and you will not hesitate to join us."

"No," replied Clive, in a firm tone, "I will not, Norries; I would rather trust myself to calm deliberate thought than to exciting oratory or smooth persuasions. In fact, Norries, as you well know, and as I have known long, I am of too eager and impetuous a nature, too easily moved, to place myself willingly in temptation. When I argue tranquilly with myself, I am master of myself; but when I go and listen to others, the strong passions of my young nature rise up. I keep myself free from all brawls; I enter into disputes with no man, for in my past life the blow of anger has too frequently preceded

the word of remonstrance, and I have more than once felt occasion to be ashamed of myself as an impetuous fool, even where I have not had to reproach myself as an unjust aggressor."

"You have had enough to bear, Clive," replied Norries; "as I know from my poor lost Mary, your dear sister—'the oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely, the insolence of office, and the spurns that patient merit of the unworthy takes.' With the old Saxon blood strong in your veins, the old Saxon freedom powerful in your heart, have not you and yours, from generation to generation, been subject to the predominating influence of the Norman usurpers, and are you not still under their sway?—But hark! there are people at the door, and many of them. Perhaps they have come to seek me."

Clive strode hastily to the window, and looked out, but then turned round, saying, "No, it is the people from Brandon House—Sir Arthur Adelon and all the rest—come down,

I dare say, to inquire after Helen, for they are very fond of her, as well they may be."

"Sir Arthur Adelon!" repeated Norries, with a slight smile, "that is well; let me look at him;" and he too approached the window. "He is much changed," he continued, as he gazed out, "and perhaps as much changed in mind as in person—but yet I must have him with us, Clive. He must give us his support, for it is necessary to have some gilding and some tinsel even on the flag of liberty."

Clive laughed aloud. "You mistake, you mistake, Norries," he said; "if you calculate thus rashly, your schemes are vain indeed. Sir Arthur Adelon is a mere man of the world; kind and good-humoured enough, but with no energy or resolution such as are absolutely necessary in those who join in great undertakings."

"It is you who mistake, Clive," replied Norries; "you see but the exterior. Underneath it there are strong things mingled with

weak ones—passions powerful enough and persevering; and you shall see: that man, with his high station, wealth, and name, shall go with me in that which I undertake, and shall prove a shelter and defence in case of need, should anything discover a portion of our schemes before they are matured. I must see him this very day before I go to Barhampton, for thither I shall certainly proceed to-night."

"Well, Norries, well, you know best," answered Clive, with a faint smile; "when I see these wonders, I may have more confidence. Till then, I tell you fairly, all your plans seem to me to be rashness approaching to madness. —I must go down and receive them, however, for I hear they have come in. Shall I tell Sir Arthur that you wish to see him, Norries?"

"No," answered the other, thoughtfully; "I will take my own opportunity." And Clive departed, leaving him alone.

CHAPTER VII.

I KNOW no more delightful sensation upon earth, than when a being whom we love, acting beneath our eyes, but unconscious that we are watching, fulfils to the utmost the bright expectations that we have formed; while in the deed, and the tone, and the manner we see the confirmation of all that we had supposed, or dreamed, or divined of excellence in heart and mind. Charles Dudley loved Eda Brandon, and all she did or said was of course a matter of deep interest to him; and although I will not say he watched, yet he observed her con-

duct during the morning of which I have been writing, and especially during their visit to the Grange, as Mr. Clive's house was called. He thought it was perfect; and so perhaps it was, as nearly as anything of the earth can be perfect; and perhaps, although there was no great event to call strong feelings into action, although there was nothing which would seem to an ordinary eye a trial of character or demeanour, yet there was much which, to a very keen and sensitive mind, showed great qualities by small traits. Helen Clive was in an inferior position of life to Eda Brandon. It may be said that the difference was very slight, that her father cultivated his own land, that she had evidently received the education and possessed the manners of a lady; but yet the very slightness of the difference might make the demeanour of the one towards the other more difficult—not, perhaps, to be what the world would call very proper, but to be perfect. It might be too cold, it might be too familiar; for

there is sometimes such a thing as familiarity which has its rise in pride, and the object of it is more likely to feel hurt by it than even by distance of manner. But there was nothing of the kind in the conduct of Eda Brandon. She treated Helen in every respect as an equal, one with whom she had been long on terms of intimate affection, and who required no new proof that she saw no difference between the position of Mr. Clive's daughter and that of the heiress of Brandon and all its wealth. There was no haughtiness, there was no appearance of condescension—the haughtiest mark of pride. It was easy, kind, unaffected, but quiet and ladylike; and although Helen herself felt a little nervous, not at the station, but at the number of the guests who poured in, Eda's manner soon put her completely at ease, and the only thing which seemed at all to discompose her, was a certain sort of familiar gallantry in the manners of Lord Hadley, which even pained another present more than herself.

But it is with Eda and Dudley that I wish particularly to deal just now; and one thing I may remark as seemingly strange, but not really so. It was with delight, as I have said, that Dudley observed the demeanour of Eda Brandon towards Helen Clive; but a saddening sensation of despondency mingled with the pleasure, and rendered it something more than melancholy. It was like that of a dying parent witnessing the success and growing greatness of a beloved child, and knowing that his own eyes must soon close upon the loved one's career of glory. He said to himself, "She never can be mine: long years of labour and toil, struggles with a hard and difficult profession, and fortunate chances with many long lapses between, could alone put me in a position to seek her love or ask her hand; and in the meantime her fate must be decided."

As they had walked down from the house, Lord Hadley had been continually by her side. He had evidently been much struck and capti-

vated. A vague hint had been thrown out that a union between himself and the heiress of Brandon had been contemplated by kind and judicious friends; and a meaning smile which had crossed the lip of young Edgar Adelon, when he saw Lord Hadley bending down and saying something apparently very tender in his cousin's ear, had sent a pang through the heart of Dudley, which his young companion would not have inflicted for worlds had he known the circumstances. Again and again Dudley repeated to himself, "It is impossible. How can I—why should I entertain any expectation? The warrior goes into the strife armed; the racer is trained and prepared for the course; I have no weapons for the struggle, no preparation for the race, although the prize is all that is desirable in life. I will yield this all-vain contention; I will withdraw from a scene where everything which takes place must give me pain. It is easily done. The term of my engagement with Lord Hadley is nearly at

an end; and I can easily plead business of importance for leaving him here, now that our tour is finished, and, once more betaking myself to my books, wait in patience till the time comes for that active life in the hard world of realities, which will, I trust, engross every feeling, and occupy every thought."

Such were his reflections and resolutions as the party, after taking leave of Helen and Mr. Clive, walked out of the door of the Grange to return to Brandon House. I often think that all reflections are vain, and all resolutions worse than vain. The first are but as the games of childhood—the construction of gay fabrics out of materials which have no solidity; the second are but shuttlecocks between the battledores of circumstances. So, at least, Charles Dudley found them both.

It is necessary, however, before I proceed farther, to say something of the exact position of the parties as they quitted the house. Eda and her uncle went first; Dudley followed half

a step farther back; and Lord Hadley and Edgar came next. As Dudley was walking on, with his eyes bent on the ground, he heard the voice of Sir Arthur's son exclaim, "Eda, Eda, we are going down by the stream, Lord Hadley and I, to see the ruins of the priory. Let us all go!"

"No, dear Edgar," answered Miss Brandon, "I can't indulge your wandering propensities to-day. I shall be tired by the time I get home, and have got a letter to write."

"I can't go, either, Edgar," said his father; "for I have a good deal of business to do."

"Well, Mr. Dudley, at all events you will come," said Edgar Adelon; but Mr. Dudley replied by informing him that he had passed some time at the priory already that morning.

"Well, come along, Lord Hadley, then," said Edgar, in a gay tone; "I never saw such uninteresting people in my life, and you shall have the treat and the benefit of my conversation all to yourself. I will tell you the legend, too,

and show you what a set of people these Brandons have been from generation to generation."

Lord Hadley did not decline, and they walked away together down the course of the stream, whilst Sir Arthur and his niece, accompanied by Dudley, pursued their course towards Brandon. They were about half-way between the Grange and the gates of the park, when a quick but heavy step was heard behind them, and Dudley, turning his head, saw a stout farm-servant following, somewhat out of breath. The man walked straight up to Sir Arthur Adelon, and presented a note, saying, "I was to give you that directly, your honour."

Sir Arthur took the note, and looked at the address without any apparent emotion; but when he opened it, his aspect changed considerably, and he stopped, saying, in a hesitating manner, "I must go back—I must go back."

"Oh! it is but a short distance," said Eda; "we can return with you."

"No, my dear, no," answered her uncle, with what seemed a good deal of embarrassment in his air; "you had better go on to Brandon. Mr. Dudley will, I am sure, escort you."

"Assuredly," replied Dudley, gravely; and Sir Arthur, adding, "I may not, perhaps, be back to luncheon, Eda, but do not wait for me," turned, and with a quick step hurried along the road towards Mr. Clive's house.

It seemed as if everything had combined to leave Charles Dudley and Eda Brandon alone together. If he had laboured a couple of years for such a consummation it would not have occurred. He did not offer Eda his arm, however; and although his heart was beating very fast with feelings that longed for utterance, he walked on, for at least a hundred and fifty yards, without a word being spoken on either side. Ladies, however, feel the awkwardness of silence more than men; and

Eda, though she was shaking very unaccountably, said, at length, "I am afraid, Mr. Dudley, that what you find here is not so beautiful and interesting as the scenes you have lately come from. You used, I remember, to be a very enthusiastic admirer of the beauties of nature."

Dudley raised his fine eyes to her face, and gazed at her for a moment with melancholy gravity. "All I admired then," he said, at length, "I admire now. All I loved then, dear Miss Brandon, I love now. It is circumstances which have changed, not I."

"I did not know that circumstances had changed," said Eda, in a low and sweet tone, as if she really felt sympathy with him for the grief his manner implied. "I had heard that a sad, a terrible change of circumstances had occurred some time before; but I was not at all aware that any new cause of grief or disappointment had been added."

Dudley again thought before he answered;

but it was not the thought of calculation, or if it was, it was but the calculation of how he should answer calmly—how he should speak the true feelings of his heart with moderation and gentleness—not at all a calculation of whether it were better to speak those feelings or not.

"You are right, Miss Brandon," he said, "the change of circumstances had taken place before; but all things have their consequences; and the results of those material alterations in fortune and station which had befallen me, were still to be made manifest to, and worked out by, myself. When first we met, you were very young—not sixteen, I think—and I was not old. Everything was in the spring-day with me. It was all full of promise. I had in those days two fortunes: worldly wealth, and even a greater store of happy hopes and expectations—the bright and luxuriant patrimony of inexperienced youth. From time to time we saw each other; till, when last we met,

prosperity had been taken from me—the treasure of earthly riches was gone, and though not actually beggared, I and my poor father were in a state of absolute poverty. Still the other fortune, that rich estate of youthful hope and inexperienced expectation, though somewhat diminished, was not altogether gone. I fancied that, in the eyes of the noble and the good, wealth would make no difference. I had never found it make any difference to me in my estimation of others. I imagined that those qualities which some had esteemed and liked in me, would still at least retain my friends. I never for an instant dreamed that it could or ought to have an influence on the adamant of love. I had almost said and done rash things in those days; but you went away out of London; and I soon began to perceive that I had bitterly deceived myself."

"You never perceived any difference in me," cried Eda, her voice trembling with emotions

which carried away all discretion. "You do not mean to say, Mr. Dudley, that you saw, or that you thought you saw, such base weakness in my nature as would render of the slightest value in my eyes a change of fortune in those I—I——" And extending her left hand, as if to cast the idea from her, she turned away, and shook her head sorrowfully, with her eyes full of tears.

"No, no, Miss Brandon," answered Dudley —"no, no, Eda, I said not so. It was the world taught me the world's views. Nay, more, I laid the blame of misunderstanding those views upon myself, not others. I saw some reason even in those views which debarred me from happiness; I felt the due value of station and fortune when I had lost them, which I never felt while they were my own. But listen to me still with patience for one moment. Expectation was not yet fully tamed. I said to myself, I will make myself a station, I will regain the

fortune which has been lost; and then, perhaps, love may re-illumine the torch of hope at its own flame, and all be light once more."

"Love!" murmured Eda, in a low tone, as he paused for an instant; but Dudley went on.

"The hardest lesson of all was still to learn —how slow, how hopelessly slow, is man's progress up the steep hill which leads to fame and emolument in this world—how vain is the effort to start into eminence at once. I had to learn all that consuming thought, and bitter care, and deep disappointment, and hopeless love, and the anguish of regret can do to wear the strongest frame, and wring the firmest heart, and quell the brightest expectations, and batten down the springs of life and hope beneath the heavy load of circumstances."

"Oh! Dudley, Dudley," cried Eda, "why, why should you yield to such dark impressions?"

"Eda," said Dudley, "would you have had me hope?"

"Yes, yes," she answered, with her cheek glowing and her eyes full of tears, as they passed the park gates and entered the avenue. "Hope! ever, ever hope! and let not adverse circumstances crush a noble spirit and a generous heart. See, there is Mr. Filmer coming down towards us; I must wipe these foolish tears from my eyes. But let me add one warning. I have said a generous heart, because, indeed, I believe yours to be so; but yet, Dudley, it was hardly generous enough when you imagined that those whom you judged worthy of love and esteem could suffer one consideration of altered fortunes to make even the slightest change in their regard or in their conduct. You should never have fancied it, and must never, never fancy it again. I can hardly imagine," she said, turning, and looking at him with a bright smile as she uttered words of reproach which she knew were not quite justified, thus qualifying with that gay look the bitter portion of her speech—"I can hardly

imagine that you know what true love is, or you would be well aware that it is indeed, as you said yourself, a thing of adamant—unchangeable and everlasting. On it no calumny can rest, no falsehood make impression; the storms and tempests of the world, the labour of those who would injure or defame, the sharp chisel of sarcasm, the grinding power of argument and opposition, can have no effect. Such is strong, true love. It must be love founded on esteem and confidence, but then, believe me, it is immovable. If ever you love, remember this."

"If ever I love, Eda!" answered Dudley, gazing at her; "you know too well that I do love, that I have loved for years."

"I once thought so," replied Eda, in a low tone; "but hush! Dudley, hush! let us compose ourselves—he is coming near."

"He does not see us," said Dudley; "his eyes are bent upon the ground. Can we not avoid him by turning through the trees?"

"No, no," answered Miss Brandon; "he

sees everything. Never suppose at any time that because his eyes are bent down they are unused. He is all sight, and never to be trusted.—Is my cheek flushed? I am sure it ought to be," she added, as her mind reverted to the words she had spoken—"I am sure it ought to be, for I feel it burn."

"A little," replied Dudley, gazing at her with a look of grateful love; "but he will not remark it."

"Oh yes, he will," answered Eda, giving a timid glance towards Dudley's face, and then drawing down her veil. "Yours is quite pale."

"It is with intense emotions," replied Dudley; "emotions of gratitude and love."

"Hush! hush!" she said; "no more on that score; we shall be able to talk more hereafter.—What a beautiful day it has been after such a stormy night. One could almost fancy that it was spring returned, if a bird would but begin to sing."

"Ah! no," answered Dudley, somewhat

sorrowfully; "though there be browns in both, the colours of the autumn are very different from those of the spring; the hues of nascent hope are in the one, of withering decay in the other; and though the skies of autumn may be glorious, they are the skies of spring which are sweet."

They were now within some twenty or thirty paces of Mr. Filmer, who was still walking on, calmly and quietly, with his eyes bent upon the ground, as if absorbed in deep and solemn meditation. The light and shadow, as he passed the trees, fell strangely upon him, giving a phantom-like appearance to his tall dark figure and pale face; and there was a fixed and rigid firmness in his whole countenance which might have made any casual observer at that moment think him the veriest ascetic that ever lived.

Eda, who knew him well, and had read his character more profoundly than he imagined, led the way straight up to him, though they

had before been on the other side of the avenue, as if she were determined that he should not pass without taking notice of them, and when they were at not more than three yards' distance, he started, saying, "Ah! my dear young lady, I did not see you.—Why, your party has become small." And his face at once assumed a look of pleasing urbanity, which rendered the whole expression as different as possible from that which his countenance had borne before.

"Edgar and Lord Hadley," answered Eda, "have gone to see the priory, and my uncle was coming home with us, when somebody stopped him upon business and carried him off."

"Mr. Dudley and I visited the priory this morning," replied Mr. Filmer; "and he seemed exceedingly pleased with it, I am happy to say."

"I was very much so, indeed," said Dudley. "In truth, my reverend friend, I feel a great

interest in all those remnants of former times, when everything had a freshness and a vigorous identity which is lost in the present state of civilization. I forget who is the author who compares man in the present polished and artificial days to a worn shilling which has lost all trace of the original stamp; but it has often struck me as a very just simile. I like the mark of the die, and every object which recals to my mind the lusty, active past, is worth a thousand modern constructions. Even the university in which I have been educated I love not so much for its associations with myself as for its associations with another epoch. There is a cloistral, secluded calm about some of the colleges, which has an effect almost melancholy and yet pleasurable."

Mr. Filmer replied in an easy strain, as if he had remarked nothing; but, nevertheless, he had perceived, somehow, without even raising his eyes, that Eda had dropped the veil over her face as he came near, and he saw that there

were traces of agitation both on her countenance and on that of Dudley. He remarked, too, that Dudley spoke more and more eloquently upon many subjects during the rest of the day; that, in fact, there was a sort of relief apparent in his whole manner, and in all his words; and he formed a judgment not very far from the truth. Such a judgment, from indications so slight, is not unusual in men who have been educated as he had been, to mark the slightest peculiarities of manner, the slightest changes of demeanour, that occur in their fellow-men, in order to take advantage of them for their own purposes. In the present instance he continued quietly his observations, without letting any one perceive that he was watching at all; but not a word, nor a look, nor a tone of Eda Brandon and Charles Dudley escaped him during the day.

Turning back with Miss Brandon and her lover towards the house, Mr. Filmer, or Father Peter, as he was sometimes called by Sir

Arthur's servants, accompanied them to the door, and then proposed that they should cross the park to a little fountain, covered with its old cross and stone, which he described as well worthy of Dudley's attention. Eda confirmed his account of its beauty, but said that she must herself go in, as she was a good deal fatigued, and had also to write a letter. She advised Dudley, however, to go and see it; and, if the truth must be told, she was not sorry to avoid the priest's society, for in his presence she felt a restraint of which she could not divest herself, even at times when she could detect no watching on the part of Filmer. She knew that he was observing with the quiet, shrewd eyes of Rome, and the very feeling embarrassed her.

Dudley had no excuse for staying behind, and he accompanied the priest on his walk, conversing on indifferent subjects, and not yet fully aware that every word and even look was watched by one who let nought fall to the

ground. For nearly a couple of hundred yards the two gentlemen walked on in silence; but then Mr. Filmer, in pursuit of his own investigations, observed, in a sort of meditative tone, "What a sweet, charming girl that is!—I think I understood that you had known her long, Mr. Dudley."

"For many years," replied his companion. "When first I knew her she was quite a girl—I had almost said a child, and very lovely even then; but I had no idea that she was the niece of Sir Arthur Adelon."

"Her mother was his sister," replied Mr. Filmer; "and the way in which she became Sir Arthur's ward was this:—Her father died when she was quite young, leaving her entirely to the control of her mother, as her sole guardian and his executrix. She was a very amiable woman, Mrs. Brandon, though, unfortunately, her husband had converted her to your church. I believe she was very sorry for her apostasy before her death, and, at all

events, she left Miss Brandon to the guardianship of her brother, Sir Arthur, with the entire management of her property."

"Till she comes of age, I suppose," Dudley replied, as the other made a short pause.

"Yes, but before that time she will be probably married," answered the priest.

"To Lord Hadley, perhaps you think?" rejoined Dudley, with very different feelings from those with which he would have pronounced such words some two or three hours before.

"Oh, no," answered Mr. Filmer, calmly; "I do not think that Sir Arthur would ever consent to her marriage with a Protestant. I know that he would sooner see her bestow her hand upon the humblest Catholic gentleman in England."

Dudley was somewhat puzzled. If the assertion of the priest could be relied upon, why had Sir Arthur Adelon so ostentatiously asked Lord Hadley there. The priest said it in a natural, easy tone; but Dudley felt that, in

some degree, he had himself been trying to extract information from Mr. Filmer, and that the attempt was somewhat dangerous with a Roman-catholic priest. He did not feel quite sure, indeed, that he had not betrayed a part of his own secrets while endeavouring to gain intelligence of the views of others. "I should have thought that the feelings of Sir Arthur Adelon were more liberal, especially as he has always yourself beside him," said Dudley, with a slight inclination of the head.

"You do me more than justice, my young friend," replied Mr. Filmer; "it is very natural in these times, when there is a persecuting and oppressive spirit abroad, that we should wish to see an heiress of great wealth, and whose husband must possess great influence, bestow her hand upon a person of our own religious creed. I may say this can be felt without the slightest degree of bigotry, or any view of proselytism. I have none, I can assure you; and indeed you may judge that it is so, when you

know that one of my best friends and most constant companions is the clergyman of the little church the spire of which you see rising up there just above the hill. My feeling is, that there is not sufficient difference between the two churches, although yours, I feel, is in some points a little heretical, to cause any disunion between honest and well-meaning men; and moreover, though anxious myself to see others adopt what I conceive to be just views, yet I confess the object of their conversion does not appear to me so great a one as to hazard the slightest chance of dissension in order to obtain it."

"Those are very liberal opinions, indeed," said Dudley; "and though I know that a good many of the laymen of the church of Rome entertain them, I was not aware that they are common amongst the clergy."

"More common than you imagine, my young friend," answered the priest; "in fact, the heads of the church itself are not so intolerant as you

suppose. Rules have been fixed, undoubtedly; definitions have been given; but it is always in the power of the church to relax its own regulations; and when sincere and devout Christianity, a feeling of that which is orthodox, and a veneration for those traditions which, descending from generation to generation through the mouths of saints and martyrs, may be considered as pure and uncorrupt as the Scriptures themselves, are perceived in any one, the church is always willing to render his return to her bosom easy and practicable, by relinquishing all those formal points of discipline which may be obnoxious to his prejudices, and by relaxing the severity of those expositions, the cutting clearness of which is repugnant to a yet unconfirmed mind."

Dudley paused in great surprise, asking himself, "What is his object?" That is a question which is rarely put by any man to his own heart, without some strong doubt of the sincerity of the person he has been conversing with.

"What is his object?" thought Dudley. "Does he really hope to convert me, by the mingled charms of his own eloquence, and the fascination of my dear Eda's fortune?" He resolved, however, not to display his real opinion of the arguments used, but to suffer the worthy priest to pursue his own course and expose his own purposes. "He must do it sooner or later," he said; "and then I shall discover what is the meaning of this long discourse. In the meantime, he cannot shake Eda's confidence in me, nor my love for her."

"I am happy to find," continued Dudley, aloud, "that such very just and liberal views are entertained; for undoubtedly, the definitions of the Council of Trent have been one of the great stumbling-blocks in the way of those persons who would willingly have abandoned doctrines of which they are by no means sure, to embrace others emanating from a church, the principal boast of which is its invariable consistency with itself."

The priest looked at him with a doubtful and hesitating glance. He was apprehensive, perhaps, of showing too much of the policy of the church of Rome; and he stopped, as it was his invariable custom to do when the expression of his opinions might do injury to the cause he advocated, and no great object was to be obtained. He thought, indeed, in the present instance, that something more might be ventured; but yet he judged it more prudent to wait awhile, calculating that if he managed well, growing passion might do the work of argument; and after viewing, with Dudley, the little fountain, he turned back to the house, directing his conversation to subjects of a totally different character, grave but not ascetic, round which he threw a peculiar and extraordinary charm. It was very strange, the fascination of his manner and conversation. When first its power was felt by any keen and quick mind, one strove to grasp and analyze it, to ascertain in what it consisted; but like those subtle and

delicate essences which chemists sometimes prepare, and which defy analysis, something, and that the most important, that which gave efficacy and vigour to the whole, always escaped. The words seemed nothing in themselves — a little subtle, perhaps — somewhat vague—not quite definite. The manner was calm and gentle, the look was only at wide distant moments emphatic; but yet there was a certain spirit in the whole which seemed to glide into the heart and brain, unnerving and full of languor, disarming opposition, persuading rather than convincing, wrapping the senses in pleasing dreams, rather than presenting tangible objects for their exercise. It was like the faint odours of unseen plants, which, stealing through the night air, visit us with a narcotic rather than a balmy influence, and lull us to a deadly sleep, without our knowing whence they come or feeling the effect till it is too late.

CHAPTER VIII.

Sir Arthur Adelon, after leaving Eda and Dudley together, hurried back as fast as he could go to the house of Mr. Clive, passing by the way the man who had brought him the note, which he still held clasped firmly in his hand. He was evidently a good deal agitated when he set out—the muscles of his face worked, his brow contracted, and muttered sentences escaped his lips. From this state he seemed to fall into deep thought. The emotions probably were not less intense, but they were more profound; and when he came near the house, he

stopped, and leaned for a moment against the gate, murmuring, "What can it be?" After a pause of a moment or two, he rang the bell, and asked the maid who appeared, where the gentleman was who had sent him that letter. The woman seemed somewhat confused, said she did not know anybody had sent him a letter, but that Mr. Clive was in the drawing-room with his daughter. Her embarrassment, and that of the baronet, however, were removed, almost as she spoke the last words, by a voice calling down the stairs, and saying, "Sir Arthur Adelon, will you do me the honour of walking up hither?"

The baronet instantly obeyed the invitation, but it was with a very pale face, and the next instant he was in the room with Norries. The latter had withdrawn into the chamber where his conference had taken place with Clive, and he fixed a steadfast gaze on the baronet as he entered; then turning towards the door, he closed it and waved his visitor to a seat,

taking one himself at the same time, and still keeping his bright grey eyes fixed firmly upon the baronet's face. Hitherto not a word had been spoken, and Norries remained silent for some instants; but at length he said, "I perceive, both by your coming and your demeanour, Sir Arthur Adelon, that you have not forgotten me."

"Oh, no! Mr. Norries," replied the baronet; "I remember you quite well, and am happy to see you. But is it not somewhat dangerous for you to visit England just now?"

"Not in the least, I think," said Norries. "I am obliged to you for your solicitude, Sir Arthur; if it had shown itself materially twelve months ago, it might have kept me out of York Castle."

"I really do not see how I could have served you," answered Sir Arthur Adelon—"indeed, I never knew that you were in York Castle."

"For three days," replied Norries, laconic-

ally. "But this is irrelevant; let me speak of more important affairs. As your memory is so good, you have probably not forgotten yet what took place eight and six years ago, in regard to transactions affecting Charles Dudley, Esquire, since dead."

"Well, sir, well," cried Sir Arthur, "what of that?"

"You inquired once," said Norries, "for the correspondence respecting that affair; I think I could give you some information concerning it."

"Was it not burnt?" exclaimed Sir Arthur. "You told me it was burnt."

"Pardon me, Sir Arthur," replied Norries; "I never told you any such thing. My partner did, but he lied in this case as in many others, and I, who knew little of the transaction at the time, found the papers after his death, and have them safe in my possession."

There was some writing paper lying on the table, clean and unsullied; but without know-

ing what he did, Sir Arthur Adelon took it in his hands, and in two minutes it was twisted into every conceivable shape. Norries gazed at him with the slightest possible smile; and in the end he said, "I am afraid, Sir Arthur, that paper will not be very serviceable; however, we can get more."

"Psha!" cried Sir Arthur Adelon; "let us think of serious things, Mr. Norries. Those letters must be destroyed. Do you mean to say they were all preserved?"

"Every one," answered Norries—"nay, more. I have spoken of eight and of six years ago, but amongst the documents there are several of a much earlier period, which show that the schemes then executed had been long devising, that the purpose then accomplished had been long nourished. The motives, too, are very evident from certain passages; and I now tell you, Sir Arthur Adelon, that if I had been made aware of the facts—of the whole facts—those schemes would never have been

accomplished, that purpose would have been frustrated." And he gazed sternly at the baronet, setting his teeth hard.

"My partner, Mr. Sherborne," continued Norries, after a pause, during which his companion uttered not a word, but remained with his eyes bent down, and his teeth gnawing his nether lip—"my partner, Mr. Sherborne, was a great scoundrel, as you know, Sir Arthur. In fact, you knew it at the time you employed him."

"No, sir, I did not," exclaimed Sir Arthur, catching at the last word.

"Yes, Sir Arthur, you did," replied Norries, firmly, "or you never would have employed him in so rascally a business."

"He suggested to me everything that was done," replied the baronet, eagerly.

"In consequence of a private conversation, of which he made a note," rejoined Norries, "and of a letter, still preserved, so confirmatory

of the memorandum, that there can be no doubt of its accuracy."

The face of Sir Arthur Adelon flushed. He was a man of one sort of courage, and he replied, haughtily, "I think you intend to insult me, sir. Beware what you are doing."

"I am quite aware," answered Norries, slowly inclining his head; "neither do I intend at all to insult you, Sir Arthur. I speak truth in plain terms, having learned in sorrow and adversity that such is the only right course to pursue. In justice and in good faith I ought to place the whole of those papers in the hands of a gentleman nearly related to that Mr. Dudley—his son, I mean."

"It could do him no good," exclaimed the baronet; "the thing is past and gone; the ruined and dead; nothing can by any father means be recovered. This Mr. Dudley could not regain a shilling, nor an acre of his father's property as you well know."

"True," replied Norries; "there are some things in law which have no remedy, as I do well know; but it is right that the son should learn who ruined his father, and he should have known long ago but for one circumstance which may perhaps operate still farther."

"What is that?" demanded the baronet, quickly; "I have no objection whatsoever to give a considerable sum for the possession of those papers.—They can be of no use to any one but myself. Come, let us talk reasonably, Mr. Norries—let us say a thousand pounds."

"Money will not do here, sir," answered the other, in a contemptuous tone; "it had its effect upon Mr. Sherborne, who was a rascal, but it will have no effect upon his partner, who is an honest man."

"Then what, in Heaven's name, do you want?" demanded Sir Arthur Adelon.

"To see you act up to your professions, Sir Arthur," replied Norries. "At the election which began poor Mr. Dudley's ruin, and

which I had some share in conducting on your part, you professed, and I really believe entertained—for I think that, in that at least, you were sincere—principles of firm and devoted attachment to the cause of the people. You declared that if they did but return you to Parliament, you would advocate all measures in favour of their rights and liberties; you were more than what is called a Radical—you were a Reformer in the true sense of the word; you gloried in being descended from the old Saxon race; you pointed out that your name itself was but a corruption of that of one of our last Saxon princes; and you promised to do your best to restore to the people that perfect freedom which is an inalienable inheritance of the Saxon blood. You called your son Edgar, in memory of Edgar Atheling, and you promised, in my hearing, to maintain those principles at all times and under all circumstances, with your voice, with your hand, with your heart's blood. Now, Sir Arthur, I call upon

you to redeem that promise; and if you do, in the way I shall point out, you shall have those papers. I have kept them back from the person to whom, perhaps, they ought justly to have been given, because I would not blacken the name of one whom I believe to be a true patriot. I found excuses for you in your own mind to excuse to myself my retention of them. I knew you to be a man of strong passions under a calm exterior; I knew that strong passions, whenever they become masters, are sure to become despots; and I thought that you had acted to the man we have mentioned, under an influence that was overpowering—the influence of the strongest and most ungovernable of all the passions, the thirst for revenge."

"Revenge!" exclaimed Sir Arthur. "Who told you I was moved by revenge?"

"No one told me," answered Norries; "I knew it. I might have read it in every line of those letters; I might have seen it in every deed you did; but there was a portion of your

previous history, Sir Arthur, which I knew from my connexion with that part of the country, and which, when once the machinations were exposed to my view, afforded the key to all. I ask you, Sir Arthur Adelon, whether, some six or seven-and-twenty years ago, Mr. Charles Dudley did not carry off from your pursuit, the lady on whom you had fixed your heart?"

Sir Arthur Adelon's usually placid face assumed the expression of a demon; and no longer averting his eyes from the fixed, stern gaze of Norries, he stared full in his face in return, and slowly inclined his head. He said not a word, but that look and that gesture were sufficient reply. They said, more plainly than any words could have spoken, "You have divined it all; you have fathomed the dark secret of my heart to the bottom."

"Well, Sir Arthur," continued Norries, with a softened air, "I can excuse strong passions, for I have them myself, and I know them at

times to be irresistible. In your case, I was sure you had been thus moved. I looked upon you as a man devoted to the service of your country; and I thought that, in a case where all other considerations should give place to the interests of my country, it would be wrong to damn for ever the name of one who might do her the best and highest of services. There was but one thing that made me doubt your sincerity."

"You should not doubt it," said Sir Arthur; "I am as sincerely devoted to the service of my country as ever."

"It is your general sincerity to which I allude," said the plain-spoken Norries; "and the reason why I doubted it is this. When you had effected your purpose—when you had ruined an honest and good man, though a Norman and an aristocrat—you did not boldly and fearlessly leave him to his fate, you afforded him assistance to save a pitiful remnant of his property, and affected benevolence and kind-

ness to a man you hated. I understand it all, Sir Arthur; it was not unnatural, but it was insincere."

"We had been upon good terms for many years," replied the baronet, who had now resumed his usual demeanour.

"Good terms!" repeated Norries, with a laugh; "well, be it so. You are now keeping up the appearance of good terms with the government which you then opposed, and of which you spoke in language certainly seditious, as it is called, and perhaps treasonable. These things have created a doubt. That doubt must be removed, not by words and professions, not by appearances and pretences, but by acts."

"Speak plainly," said Sir Arthur Adelon. "What is it that you want?"

"There is a meeting to be held at twelve o'clock this night in the little town of Barhampton," said Norries, "where several gentlemen, entertaining precisely the same sentiments which you expressed some eight years

ago to the people of Yorkshire, are to take into consideration what decisive measures can be adopted for obtaining those objects which you then professed to seek. I require that you should then join us, and be one of us."

"Impossible!" cried Sir Arthur Adelon, with a look of consternation and astonishment. "Would you have me attend a seditious meeting at midnight with a man who has fled from the course of justice—I, a magistrate for the county?"

A bitter smile came upon the lip of his companion; but he replied immediately, "Even so! I would, indeed, Sir Arthur. The spirit of patriotism is not so strong in you, it would seem, as the spirit of revenge, or you would not hesitate. But thus much, to end all, one way or the other—you either come, and, if you do come and frankly join us without any insincerity, receive the papers I have mentioned; or you stay away, and Mr. Edward Dudley receives them."

"This is unfair," exclaimed Sir Arthur Adelon.

"Unfair!" replied Norries; "how unfair, sir? I am acting according to my conscience, however you may be acting. My only reason for withholding these letters from the person who would have a right to possess them if their suppression were not necessary to the service of my country, is, because I trust that you, whose name and station may be an infinite advantage as a leader of the people hereafter, will put yourself in that position in which no want of moral courage, no vacillating hesitation can be shown, or would be possible. If you refuse to do so, you will take from me my only motive for not giving them to him who will know how to use them rightly. You will show yourself as insincere in your professions of patriotism as you were insincere in your professions of friendship; and I shall then regard you with contempt, and treat you without consideration."

There was a stern and commanding energy in his manner, which crushed down, as it were,

in the breast of Sir Arthur Adelon the angry feelings which his impetuous words aroused. He felt cowed in the presence of the bold, fearless man who addressed him. He remembered, in former times, several traits of his decision and unhesitating vehemence, and he felt sure that he would do as much or more than he said. At first, indeed, anger was predominant; he gathered himself up, as it were, for a spring; but his heart failed him, and he said, in a mild tone, "You are too fierce—you are too fierce! Let me consider for a moment how this can be arranged. I am as willing as any one to make sacrifices for my country's advantage; but first you take me by surprise, next you use words and proceed in a manner which are little likely to induce me to trust to your guidance."

He thought he had got an advantage, and he was proceeding, gradually resuming a tone of dignity, when Norries stopped him, saying, "Sir Arthur Adelon, there are times and cir-

cumstances which of themselves, and in their own pressing nature, abridge all ceremonies. If your house were on fire, and you in danger of perishing by the flames, I should not wait for the punctilios of etiquette, but should wake you roughly, saying, 'Run, run, save your life and your family!' Sir, I tell you England is on fire, and the time is come for all men to choose their part. The days of weak indifference are over. Now is the time for decision and action; but nevertheless, I will not leave you any excuse, but humbly entreat you to come to our meeting to-night, and support with your presence, and your voice, and your influence, those principles which you have asserted warmly on other occasions."

"But it may be very difficult to manage," said Sir Arthur Adelon; "I have guests in my house, whom I cannot in courtesy leave without some exceedingly good excuse. I am not accustomed to go out at such hours of the

night, and to do so will certainly appear very suspicious, especially under existing circumstances."

"All that will be easily arranged," answered Norries. "You are a magistrate, you say, and may consequently be called upon at any hour on pressing occasions. You do not, of course, communicate to your family or your guests the exact business which calls you forth, or the motives for going at one hour rather than another; but should anything more be wanting to smoothe the way for you, I will presently write you a note, calling upon you to be at Barhampton to-night at twelve, on matters of importance. I do not think," he added, with a sneering smile, "that even your confessor will venture to cross-question a gentleman of your independence upon a business with which he has nothing to do."

"Certainly not," replied Sir Arthur Adelon; "and I have no objection to come; but I can-

not bind myself to anything till I hear upon what measures your friends decide."

"Nor can I bind myself to anything, then, till I hear upon what you do decide," rejoined Norries. "The papers are yours whenever you act up to your professions. I shall ask nothing more, Sir Arthur. I have a copy of your speech upon an occasion which you well remember; I will require nothing more of you than to fulfil the pledges therein given, and the moment you prove you are ready so to act, I resign into your hands those letters, of which others might not judge so favourably as I am inclined to judge. Do you promise to come?"

"I do," answered Sir Arthur Adelon, in a firmer tone than he had hitherto used, but with a certain degree of bitterness too. "Yet, Norries, there are various other thoughts and considerations of deep moment, which our conversation of to-day suggests. It revives in me the memories and feelings of past years. You

should have considered that these matters had passed away from my mind for a long time; that of the plans, and hopes, and schemes, and passions of those times, some have been accomplished or gratified, and have been well nigh forgotten; some, from the utter hopelessness of seeing them accomplished, have faded away, and become more like a vision than a reality. What will not a man do when he is eager and excited with the vehement impulse of fresh feelings and sharp discussions, and the enthusiasm of those who surround him?—But take those accessories away, and the purposes themselves fall into a sleep from which it requires some time and preparation to arouse them into active and energetic being again. You should have considered this, and not pressed me so eagerly without some preparation."

"Perhaps I should," replied Norries; "but, Sir Arthur, you have known me long, and have known me to be a brief and abrupt man. *My* purposes never sleep: *my* objects never fade—

the one engrossing object of my country's fate and the welfare of my fellow-men is never a passing vision to my eyes, but a stern reality ever present, so that I am but little able to comprehend the hesitations of other men."

Sir Arthur Adelon, while the other spoke, had cast down his eyes thoughtfully, as if little attending to the words of his companion; but when he ceased speaking, he said, in an abstracted manner, "This Dudley, too, he has intruded himself into my family. He is now at Brandon, as you have doubtless heard. The cold, icy hand seemed to seize my heart again when I saw him. I felt as if the spawn of the viper were before me, and as if it were destined that the race were to survive and poison my peace, even when the reptile that first stung me was crushed."

Norries gazed at him steadfastly, with his brow contracted with a steady, contemplative, inquiring look; and then he replied, "I do beseech you, Sir Arthur Adelon, to banish such

thoughts—to let the faults of the dead, if faults there were, rest with the dead. I think you believe in a God, do you not? Well, sir, there is a God who will judge him and you. He is gone to receive his judgment; the time will come, ere long, for you to receive yours. In the meanwhile, injure not one who has never injured you, and pursue this fell and heinous vengeance no further against the son of one whom you once loved——"

"And of one I always hated," answered the baronet, finishing the sentence for him. "But do you not know, Norries, that as the sweetest wine turns soonest to vinegar, so love, wronged and despised, changes to the bitterest hate; as for the rest, I purpose pursuing no vengeance against the young man. I wish he would quit my dwelling, for the very feeling of being obliged to maintain a courteous and soft demeanour towards him, increases the loathing with which I regard him. That is all—that is

all, I assure you; I would do him no harm—but I love him not, nevertheless."

"I can see that, Sir Arthur Adelon," answered his companion; "and I see, moreover, a dark and sinister fire in your eyes, which I observed once before, when first in my presence you mentioned the name of Mr. Dudley to my partner. There were deeds followed that mention, which I need not call to your mind. I trust there will be none such now—nay, nor any attempt towards them; if there be, I will prevent it. I am not so good a lawyer—indeed, I know but little of the trade—I am not so good a lawyer as Mr. Sherborne, but I am a bolder, more resolute, and more honest man. However, I shall see you to-night. Is it not so?"

"Undoubtedly," answered Sir Arthur Adelon; "but you have not yet told me where I shall find you in Barhampton."

"You had better go to the little inn—the Rose, I think it is called," replied Norries;

"there is but one. There some one shall come to lead you to us; for we are upon our guard, Sir Arthur, and resolute neither to be taken unawares, as some men have been, nor to act rashly, and bring down destruction on our own heads, as those thoughtless, weak, and poor-spirited men did in Yorkshire."

"I am very happy to hear it," said the baronet, in a tone of sincerity. "I will be there somewhat before twelve; till then, farewell." And shaking Norries by the hand with every sort of apparent cordiality, he left him, and returned to Brandon. But when he had re-entered the house, he retired for some time to the library, not to consider his future conduct, not to review the past. It was, in truth, that the conversation of that morning had aroused within him feelings dark, bitter, and deadly, which had slept for years; and he felt he could not see Mr. Dudley without calming himself, lest sensations should appear which he wished studiously to conceal from every eye.

CHAPTER IX.

With a quiet, cat-like watchfulness, Mr. Filmer remarked everything which passed between Eda Brandon and Charles Dudley. It was not words that he laid in wait for, but looks and gestures, the involuntary as well as the voluntary, the trifling as well as the important. Nothing escaped him, not even the accidental trait or the slightest possible indication of a passing emotion. Not the quick glance of the eye, withdrawn as soon as given, not the trembling hand nor the quivering lip, not the irrepressible sigh: not the fit of absence and the

sudden raising of the look to the loved one's face, was unremarked by one who knew human nature well, and had made a trade of observation. "They love," was his conclusion, "and they understand each other. That walk home has concluded what seems to have been begun long ago. Now, then, what good is to be derived from this affair?"

It is a common calculation which he made, but one very apt to mislead. Men who see others labouring for the gratification of their passions are often tempted by the opportunity to endeavour to rule them for their own purposes, and then whatever event occurs, they ask, "What good is to be derived from this affair?" But they often miscalculate, because they do not ask themselves also, "Is there anything to be made of it, with honour and honesty?" If they did, they might succeed where they every day fail.

Mr. Filmer, however, had his own particular views, which led him upon one peculiar

course. His very position gave a direction to all his actions. The Roman priest stands alone amidst the world, separated from all the dearest ties of our nature by an irremovable barrier. He may have sympathies, but they are curtailed and restricted; he may have affections, but they are limited and enthralled. One predominant object is ever before him—one career is fixed for his efforts. He stands alone in the world, I repeat, not so much the servant of God as the servant of a hierarchy, to the interest and advancement of which all his energies must be devoted, and for whose purposes all his talents must be employed. As long as he can bring the satisfaction of affections, and the gratification of any passions, within the circle to which the whole course of education from his earliest years has restricted his consciousness of duty, perhaps they may be more strongly—I had almost said more fiercely—exercised from the very fact of their narrow range; but the moment they

would go beyond that limit, the petrifying influence of an engrossing church comes in, and changes the man into the mere representation of a system.

Such was the situation of Mr. Filmer. He was by no means without passions, fiery, eager, impetuous; but they were subdued to the one strict rule, and setting out with that mighty conquest, it was in general more easy for him to subdue the minds of other men also. He was not without considerable abilities—abilities approaching genius. He might have been a great man, in short, if he had not been compelled to be an artful man. But for a priest of that church, in the midst of an adverse population, it is impossible to be otherwise. It is not a religion of openness and candour; and its means must be covert, its course tortuous and indirect. Even in the very case of Mr. Dudley, his passions were not quiescent; but he was prepared to sacrifice all personal feeling for the one great object of his existence,

and he watched, as I have said, asking himself, "To what uses the events taking place could be applied?"

It was not, however, Dudley alone whom he watched, nor Dudley and Eda. Sir Arthur Adelon was also an object of attentive consideration during the evening. There was something in his manner which showed the keen eye of the priest that the mind was not at ease, that there was something working within the baronet's bosom; and he was surprised that it was not revealed to him at once, for the secret of Sir Arthur Adelon's thoughts was not often concealed from him. The whole of his past life had been displayed before Filmer's eyes, and much which had been taking place had been discussed again and again between them. So far there was nothing to be concealed; and the priest marvelled that, if anything had gone wrong in the course of Sir Arthur's morning expedition, he could sit for several hours without communicating the fact to him.

Sir Arthur, however, paused and hesitated; not that he feared at all to recur to the past, but it was his yet unconfirmed purposes for the future which he hesitated to reveal. He knew that Filmer was a firmer, more resolute man than himself; he doubted that he would approve any—even the slightest, concession to fear. That he was politic and skilful he knew, and that his policy and skill would be exercised in his patron's behalf he was also fully convinced. But there was a dread upon him, and he apprehended that the priest would advise measures too bold for his nerves at that time. If he had been forced into vigorous defence, Sir Arthur would have sought his advice at once; but there was a choice of courses before him; he hesitated; hesitation is always a weakness, and as such is sure to take the weaker course. Twice, however, during the evening, he caught Filmer's eye resting upon him with a very inquiring look. He judged that he suspected something, and therefore he resolved in the end to tell him a

part—to show him a half-confidence; deceiving himself, as all men in such circumstances do deceive themselves, and believing that he could to a certain extent deceive Mr. Filmer also, although he had known that clear-sighted and penetrating man for seven-and-twenty years.

The dinner passed most cheerfully with all but Sir Arthur Adelon. Lord Hadley was in great spirits; and, seated next Eda, he made himself as agreeable as moderate talents, gentlemanly manners, and no very decided character would admit. Dudley was calm, by no means so gay as his young companion; but yet the happiness that was in his heart, like a lamp within an alabaster urn, spread light and cheerfulness over all. Mr. Filmer was, as usual, composed and tranquil in his manner; at times impressive in his language, but often adding to the gaiety of others by a quiet jest or epigrammatic reply, which derived additional force from his seeming unconscious of its possessing any. Eda left the table very soon after the dessert

had appeared. There were those things in her bosom which made her feel happy in the solitude of her own chamber. Thought, calm, uninterrupted thought, was at that moment very sweet to her. She loved and was beloved; and she had the grand satisfaction of feeling that she had it in her power to raise one to whom her affections had been given for years, who possessed her highest esteem, and who, she knew, well deserved high station, from unmerited misfortunes to the position which he was born to ornament. It was indeed a blessing, and Eda went and pondered upon it till her eyes filled with pleasant tears.

For about a quarter of an hour after she had gone, Sir Arthur Adelon continued at the table, passing the wine with somewhat nervous haste, and keeping up a broken conversation from which his thoughts were often absent. At length he said, speaking across the table, "Filmer, my reverend friend, I wish to speak with you for a few minutes—Lord Hadley, Mr.

Dudley, you must not suffer the wine to stand while we are absent; I shall be back almost immediately." And he led the way out of the room.

Filmer followed him with a quiet smile, saying to himself, as he walked along towards the library, "What men do timidly they always do awkwardly; in that they are different from women, in whom timidity is grace. Adelon has had twenty opportunities of speaking to me, and has of course chosen the worst."

"Well, Filmer," said the baronet, almost before the door was closed, "I have something to talk to you about of great importance."

"I thought so, Sir Arthur," answered Mr. Filmer. "What is it?"

"Why did you think so?" inquired his friend, somewhat surprised, and somewhat apprehensive.

"Because it seemed to me that you had been annoyed at something," replied Filmer. "When you are uneasy, Sir Arthur, it is soon

perceived—too soon, indeed. The young and unobserving may not remark such things, but one who has been, I trust I may say, your friend for so many years, can perceive when you are uneasy in a moment; and a very shrewd judge of men's feelings and actions, which I do not pretend to be, would, I doubt not, discover the uneasiness, even without having had the advantage of such long acquaintance."

These words, as he intended, added to the embarrassment which Sir Arthur already felt; but nevertheless he pursued his course, endeavouring, as far as possible, to conceal that he had any concealment. "Well, Filmer, well," he said, "men cannot alter their natures, you know; and the matter is one which might well cause uneasiness. You recollect that affair of Charles Dudley. You do not at all doubt that this is his son who is here?"

"No," answered Mr. Filmer, drily; "but we knew that last night. I certainly did, from the moment I saw the back of his head,

and your face left no doubt that you had made the same discovery."

"The very first sight of him," answered Sir Arthur Adelon, bitterly, "and the feelings which that sight produced, left me no doubt of who it was that stood before me. But listen a moment, Filmer—listen a moment. There is much more behind. You remember well that business of Charles Dudley, I say—of him who was my friend and companion, my rival and my enemy, and, last, my acquaintance——"

"And your victim," murmured Filmer, in so low a tone that Sir Arthur Adelon did not remark the words, but added, "—and my debtor. You doubtless also remember the election which we contested, and my lawyers, Messrs. Sherborne and Norries?"

"Perfectly," answered Filmer; "the one the soul of policy and intrigue—shrewd, penetrating, subtle, and faithless; the other, the incarnation of republican energy and determination—rash and inconsiderate, though full of vigour

and ability. He was implicated, a short time ago, in the Chartist insurrection, apprehended with his fellows, if I remember right, and thrust into York jail——"

"Whence he made his escape in two or three days," rejoined Sir Arthur Adelon; "it would be a strong prison that would keep him in. However, Sherborne is dead; Norries, alive, well, and in this country."

"That is no great matter, then," answered Mr. Filmer; "Sherborne was the dangerous man, and he is gone. All your communications were with him, my good friend—at least, as far I know, and I think I saw every letter."

The words, "I think," were spoken in a somewhat doubtful tone, as if he did not feel quite sure of the extent of Sir Arthur's confidence; but the baronet replied, eagerly, "Every one, Filmer; and indeed, as you well know, many of them were dictated by yourself."

"True!" said the priest—"true! I am happy to say they were—I say I am happy,

Sir Arthur, because it was but right that man should receive a check. Not contented with marrying a lady of the only true church, who was promised by her relations to one of their own just and reasonable belief, he perverted her from the path of truth into that of error, and in twelve months had filled her mind with all the foulest doctrines of that heresy in which he had himself been brought up. It was just and right, Sir Arthur, that he should not be permitted to go on in such a course, and that he should feel even here the consequences of those acts."

"Yes; but, my dear friend," replied Sir Arthur Adelon, "those papers are of much importance, let me tell you. Both your character and mine are compromised if they should ever see the light——"

"But you told me they were burned," said Mr. Filmer, with a countenance less firm and tranquil than usual.

"Yes, so Sherborne assured me most so-

lemnly," replied Sir Arthur Adelon; "but nevertheless it is not the truth. They are all in the hands of this Norries, and he is using every possible means to render them available for his own purposes."

This was, as the reader knows, substantially true; for Sir Arthur Adelon was one of those men who do not like to tell a direct falsehood, even when it is their intention to deceive; and he intended his words to convey to the mind of the priest a very different impression of Norries' intentions, while he could always fall back upon the precise terms he had employed, and put a larger interpretation upon them than Mr. Filmer was likely to do at the moment.

The priest mused. "Why, what can he do with them?" he demanded, at length, still in a thoughtful tone. "They can be of little service to him. The time is long past; the circumstances altogether forgotten. Charles Dudley, of St. Austin's, is dead——"

"But his son is living," replied the baronet, quickly, impatient that his companion did not see the importance of the documents at once—"his son is living; Norries knows that he is here, and he threatens to place the whole of the papers in his hands."

"That might be unpleasant, certainly," answered Filmer; "although you had every right to act as you did act—at least such I humbly judge to be the case—yet one would not like to have all one's private and confidential communications to a solicitor exposed to the eyes of an adversary's son."

"Like!" exclaimed Sir Arthur, vehemently; "Filmer, you use wonderfully cold terms to-night. Why, it would be ruin and destruction! Call to mind, I beg of you, all the particulars of the transaction. Remember what was done to lead him on from expense to expense in that business. Remember all which that man Sherborne suggested, and which we executed.—The matter of the petition, too, against his return,

and what was arranged between our people and his own agents, and the business of the flaw in the title—you must have forgotten, I think."

"Oh! no," replied the priest; "I have not forgotten, Sir Arthur, and I say it would be unpleasant, very unpleasant.—What does this person Norries ask for the papers?"

"Oh! a great deal," answered Sir Arthur Adelon, still speaking with that sort of mental reservation which he had learned betimes; "more than I am inclined to grant—a great deal more; but I shall see him to-night. I have an appointment with him at Barhampton, and shall there learn what is the real extent of his demand."

The priest meditated for several minutes, with a grave and somewhat anxious countenance. "Norries," he said, at length, "was a wild and somewhat eccentric man, but, as far as I could judge, a just and honest one. His views, too, though somewhat excessive, as his

acts were occasionally ill-timed, were all in a right direction. I am afraid, Sir Arthur, we have fallen back from the ground we then occupied. The truth is, my excellent friend, the Church of Rome, as it is called, the Catholic Church, as it really is, has not that tendency which men suppose towards the aristocratic distinctions which have risen up in this land. It might place upon its banner the words 'Civil liberty, spiritual submission.' It reverences all ancient things, amongst the rest, ancient blood. But is certainly opposed to an aristocracy springing from the people, and founded upon wealth, although in itself it may be termed a spiritual republic, in which every man, according to his genius and ability, can, with the grace of God, rise to the very highest of its grades, even to the chair of St. Peter itself.—We have often seen it.—But, as is the case in all republics, the utmost submission is required to the ruling power, although there is always a corrective for the misuse of power

in the synods and councils. It is a hierarchy, indeed, but a hierarchy open to all men; and, as a hierarchy, it is opposed to the domination of all lay powers, which are ever inclined to resist the milder influence of spiritual powers."

"But what has all this to do with the question?" exclaimed Sir Arthur Adelon, not comprehending what the reader has perhaps perceived—that the priest was carrying on in words one train of reasoning, very loosely connected with the immediate subject, while in thought he was revolving more pertinently all the difficult points that were before him.

"What I mean to say is this," replied Mr. Filmer. "Men consider it strange that Roman Catholics should, from time to time, give their support to movements savouring of republicanism; and that persons, whose views tend to republicanism, should often link themselves closely with Catholics; but, as I have shown, the connexion is not at all unnatural, and the

views of this good man Norries might well be, as they were, supported by ourselves, even were it not perfectly right and justifiable, in the pursuit of a great and all-important religious object, to combine even with men the most opposed to us in the minor points of politics, when, by so doing, we see the probability of advancing the truth."

"What! would you have me, then, join with him now?" exclaimed Sir Arthur, in considerable surprise; for the arguments of Father Peter went so directly to support the inducements held out by Norries, that the baronet could hardly persuade himself there had not been some communication between the Chartist and the priest.

"I did not exactly say that," answered Filmer. "Men's views frequently undergo a change in a few years. I know not what this man's opinions may now be. He was then an eager advocate for perfect freedom of religious opinions—he was then for sweeping away

altogether what they call here the Church of the State, and leaving every man to follow what creed he thinks best."

"But, surely, my reverend friend," exclaimed Sir Arthur Adelon, "such are principles you would never support or even tolerate. It was in his religious views alone that I differed from Norries."

The priest smiled with one of those calm, sagacious smiles that have a certain though moderate portion of triumph in them, the triumph of superior astuteness. "I would support them for their hour," he said. "I remember hearing of a wise stratagem practised by a great general who was besieging a refractory city. The inhabitants had dammed up a river which ran on one side of the town, and thus had defended their walls on that side from all attack. The dam or barrier which they had constructed was immediately under the fire of one of their strongest works, so that it was unassailable; but the general of whom I speak,

by a week's hard labour, turned the course of a still larger river into that which served for their defence, and the mighty torrent, rushing down, swept away the barriers altogether. The river resumed its equal flow, and the attacking army, marching on, took the town by storm on the very side where it had been judged impregnable. Now, my dear friend, the Catholic religion is the attacking army; the revolted and besieged city is this country of England; the overflowed river which defends us is moderate toleration of opinion; the barrier which keeps the waters up is the heretical church of this country, and we have nought to do but to pour the torrent of licentious freedom against that barrier till it is quite overthrown, in order to have a clear way for our march, and to secure our ultimate triumph."

The baronet paused and mused for several moments, partly considering the new views which his companion had propounded, partly debating with himself as to whether he should

make his confidence more complete than he had at first intended, and before he replied, Mr. Filmer went on again. "I do not mean to say, Sir Arthur," he continued, "that I would advise you to take any rash or dangerous step; and indeed, on the contrary, I think you had a great deal better, while you give encouragement to the moral movement, oppose most strongly all appeal to force, till the country is far more prepared for it than at present. To show yourself upon their side may give vigour to their proceedings, may gain many adherents to range themselves openly with them, who are merely restrained by fear and timidity, and may assist them in raising that prestige of power, numbers and respectability, which, if it can be maintained, conquers in the end all opposition; for, as you are well aware, so curiously constituted is the mind of this nation, that no question, however absurd, no view, however false, no measure, however evil and detrimental, will not gain the adherence of the great multitude, if they can

once be taught to believe, by truth or falsehood, that it is supported by numbers and by respectability. I have no doubt, that if I could show, or rather, if I could persuade, the people of England that there are a million or two of atheists in the land demanding the abolition of all religious worship whatsoever, the great body of the people would be easily induced to renounce their God, and endeavour to sweep away every trace of religion from the land. There is no being on the face of the earth so susceptible of moral contagion as an Englishman."

"It is a dark view of the case," said Sir Arthur Adelon.

"But a true one," answered Filmer, "otherwise England would have been still Catholic.—However, to return to these papers. You say you will see Norries again to-night; you must then discover what is the extent of his demand. I would make him no promises, were I in your place, till I had had time for thought and deli-

beration—neither would I refuse anything that he might demand, that is to say, not absolutely, till we have consulted together.—I will go with you, if you like, to speak with him."

"I do not think he would open his views before another," said Sir Arthur, hastily; "but as it is well, my reverend friend, to be prepared against the worst, let us consider what must be done should this man's views be very exorbitant, and should he refuse all time for deliberation."

"Then you must say No, of course," replied Filmer; and we will take measures against his measures."

"I see none that we can take," answered the baronet, gloomily. "He would instantly place the papers in this young man's hands, and then ruin, and destruction, and disgrace would be the consequence."

"Should you find that there is danger of his doing so suddenly," was Mr. Filmer's reply, "we must deal with Mr. Dudley ourselves,

either in attaching him to us by bringing him over to the true faith again, or——"

"There is no chance of that—there is no chance of that!" exclaimed the baronet, interrupting him, and waving his hand impatiently. "Filmer, you think your eloquence can do everything; but you would as soon move the church of St. Peter, and set it down in the capital of England, as you would bring back to the true faith one of that stubborn race of heretics!"

"You are prejudiced, my friend," replied Filmer, calmly; "but do not suppose that I rely upon my own eloquence. It can do nothing but by strength from on high, and the voice of the true church is powerful. Still, temporal means must be employed as well; and I see a way before me of so completely rendering it his interest, notwithstanding every cause of enmity he may have, to bury all past deeds in oblivion, to seek your friendship rather than your hate, and, I trust, even to return to the bosom

of the church, that I am not without very great hopes of success. Should those hopes prove vain, however, my dear Sir Arthur,—should he show himself deaf to the voice of truth, obstinate in error, and revengeful and rancorous in disposition, we must use the right of self-defence, which every creature has, and, in a firm, determined spirit, but with prudent skill, retort upon him any attack he may make upon you, and, without hesitation or fear, aim blow after blow, till he either sinks beneath the assault, or is driven to flight for safety."

His brow gathered into a stern and determined frown as he spoke; and Sir Arthur Adelon so well knew his unflinching resolution in the hour of danger, and his keen and subtle policy in the time of difficulty, that he gained courage from the courage of his companion, and smiled with some bitter satisfaction at the thought of pursuing the vengeance he had already heaped upon the father to the destruc-

tion of the son likewise. He only ventured to observe, "How either of these two objects is to be accomplished I do not see."

"Leave that to me," answered Filmer, in a confident tone. "I think you have never known me fail, Sir Arthur, in that which I promised you to perform. I will mature my plans, prepare my ground for either course; and though there may be difficulties which would startle a weak, irresolute, or unpractised mind, they alarm not me. On the contrary, I often think it is a blessing of God that I am placed in a calm and tranquil position of life, and have embraced a sacred profession, which rules and regulates the turbulent impulses of our nature; for I feel a sort of expansion of mind and rejoicing of heart when circumstances compel me to struggle with intricate and perilous difficulties, and overcome stubborn and apparently insurmountable obstacles, which might have led me, had I not been excluded from mundane things,

into the strife and toil and degrading greatness of mere earthly ambition."

It is probable that he really believed what he said; for there is no man who does not deceive himself more or less, and those who from passion, or interest, or education, or any other evil inducement, fall into the darkest errors, are those who are in most need of self-deception. He thought deeply for a moment or two after he had spoken, and there was a gloomy look of pride upon his countenance, too, as if he even regretted that in which he pretended to rejoice—a shadow from the fallen archangel's wing. But then again he roused himself with a start, and said, in an ordinary and composed tone, "We will talk over our old plans early to-morrow, Sir Arthur; you had better now go to your conference."

"Not yet," said Sir Arthur, rising. "It is not to take place till twelve. But we must rejoin those young men, or they may think our

prolonged absence strange." Thus saying, he led the way to the door, and Filmer only detained him to add one sentence.

"Remember," he said, "do not commit yourself."

CHAPTER X.

THE town of Barhampton — or rather, that town which it suits me so to denominate—is one of no great importance in point of size, and of no great commerce, for railroads have not yet reached it; and the nearest point which had been attained by any of those strange contrivances for hurrying man through life and through a country, lay at the distance of nearly fifty miles at the time of which I speak. Nevertheless, it was a sea-port; and had it been near the capital, near any important town, or situated in a thickly-populated dis-

trict, it possessed several considerable advantages, which would have secured to it, in all probability, an extensive and lucrative trade. It had a very nice small harbour, for which man had done something and nature much. The water was deep therein; and had there been room for one of the unwieldy monsters of the deep, a three-decker might have lain at anchor there with six fathom under her keel. But the harbour was very small, and had a line-of-battle ship attempted it, her boom would probably have knocked down the harbour-master's office, at the end of the little jetty, while her bowsprit entered the Lord Nelson public-house by the windows of the first floor. Boats and coasters, of from thirty to ninety tons, could come in at all times of tide, but nothing larger was seen in the harbour of Barhampton.

Outside the harbour, however, in what was called the bay, especially when the wind set strong from the south-west, a very different scene was displayed, for there nature seemed

to have laboured alone on a far grander scale. Two high and rocky promontories, at some points about a mile and a half apart, stretched forth from the general line of the coast into the sea, like two gigantic piers. One, following the line of the high ridge which crowned it, was nearly straight; the other swept round in the arc of a large circle, projecting considerably farther into the ocean than the other, but gradually approaching, in its sweep, the opposite promontory; so that, at the entrance of this magnificent bay, the passage was not more than half a mile in width. Few winds, of all those to which mariners have given name, affected in any great degree the deep still waters within that high and mountainous circle; and there, when tempests were raging without, might be seen riding, in calm security, the rich argosie and the stately ship of war. No cargoes, however, were now disembarked at Barhampton, except those of the small vessels which entered the harbour, and which supplied

the town and the neighbouring country with a variety of miscellaneous articles of ordinary use.

Nevertheless, in former times, the town, it would appear, must have been a place of some importance. Rising up the slopes of the hills, from the brink of the harbour, its narrow, tortuous, ill-lighted, unswept, and dilapidated-looking streets reached the summit of the high ground, where a number of superior houses were to be found, somewhat stately in appearance, antique in form, and cold and formal in aspect, except, indeed, where a cheerful little garden interposed, blushing with china-astres, dahlias, and other autumnal flowers. Yet even these could not give it an air of life, or if they did at all, it was an air of vegetable life. There was no movement, there was no activity in it. It seemed as if everybody in the place was dead, except a few men who had come in to bury the rest. Beyond these houses of the better classes, as rich people are called,

were some poorer dwellings, descending the slope on the opposite side of the ridge; and beyond these again, came the ancient walls of the town, built and perfected when Barhampton was a place of strength.

The town had not, indeed, been dismantled even yet, but it had been disarmed; and now, instead of large cannon and soldiers, "bearded like pard," the broad ramparts displayed the nursery-maids and the little children of the citizens flirting with apprentices, or peeping out of empty embrasures, or, on the Sunday, the great mass of the inhabitants of the town walking in gay attire, enjoying the fine air, and gazing over the wide prospect. Round about, nearly in the shape of a horse-shoe, from one point of the harbour to the other, enclosing the whole city, if it could be so called, within their area, swept those old walls, time-worn, and lichen-covered, and loaded with snapdragon. No mason's trowel, no busy chisel, had been employed upon them for more than two centuries, and the hard knocks of

Oliver Cromwell's cannon had left traces still unobliterated even by the equalizing hand of time.

The external appearance of the place was not at all deceptive. The march of improvement was not a quick march in Barhampton. In fact, in the space of fifty years, but one improvement had been made in the town, and the audacious and reforming mayor, who had sanctioned, recommended, and successfully carried out this act of innovation, had been held in execration ever since by a very considerable portion of his fellow-townsmen. The deed I speak of was the enlargement of the High-street, and the giving it as near as possible a straight-forward direction. It would now admit two carriages, or even wagons, abreast in every part; formerly only one could pass, except at particular places, where a greater expansion had been purposely given to the road, in order to prevent the comers up and goers down from jamming each other together immovably. In

previous times, also, this street had pursued a sort of zigzag direction, which nearly doubled its length, and this had evidently been done, not for the purpose of avoiding the acclivities, but rather for that of finding them out; for even in going down the hill, carriages had to mount as often, though not so far at any one time, as they had to descend; and in coming up, one rise seemed only to be overcome in order to go down and seek for another.

The same innovating magistrate who had committed the heinous act of straightening and widening the street, had expressed an antipathy to the old town gates, and their heavy oaken doors, with portcullis and draw-bridge; but the whole town rose as one man to resist his rash and horrible proceedings. In vain he showed that more than one horse had taken fright in going over the clattering, rickety, old bridge; in vain he pointed out that a very respectable old lady had broken her neck at the same spot by a fall into the ditch. The people said that

the horses were mad and the lady drunk, to do such things, and the mayor died, like all great patriots, before he saw his schemes for the improvement of his native place carried into full accomplishment.

Thirty years had passed since the reign of this potentate, and a change had come over the spirit of the people of Barhampton. There were many great reformers in the place—men who sighed for a complete change in all things —who stood up for the rights and liberties of the people—who would have all men permitted to sell gin and cordial compounds from any hour at which they chose to begin, to any hour at which they chose to end—who corrected municipal abuses, and castigated corrupt parish-officers—who worried the mayor, tormented the aldermen, bored the county magistrates and members of parliament, abused the overseers, and set even the beadle at nought. But in the mending of their ways, they still forgot to mend the ways of the city: that did not come under

their notions of reform. They refused a church-rate, and therefore could not be expected to vote a paving and lighting rate. They objected to all taxes of all kinds, and most of all they objected to tax themselves. They evaded imposts wherever they could; paid grumblingly those they were compelled to pay; cheated the customs by prescription, and the excise by cunning; and thought themselves pure and immaculate if they only defrauded the state and escaped the law. How often is it with men, that punishment rather than crime is considered disgraceful!

But I must not moralize upon the little community of Barhampton. Things went on increasing and prospering with the reformers. At first they were moved apparently by nothing but the pure spirit of innovation; but there were some men of more mind amongst them than the rest; and having all agreed upon the necessity of great and sweeping changes in church, state, and municipality, they proceeded

to inquire what sort of changes were desirable. They instructed themselves in what other people demanded, and thus the reforming part of the population divided itself into three distinct portions, consisting of Whigs, Radicals, and Chartists. Amongst the former were some of the most respectable and dullest men of the town: the Radicals comprised the great body of the mob-ocracy. The Chartists were men of enthusiastic temperaments, sincere and eager characters, and in many instances, of considerable powers of mind. They saw great social evils, magnified their extent by the force of imagination, and, unaccustomed to any of the details of public business, perceived but one remedy for the sickness of the state, and imagined that remedy to be a panacea for all ills. Moral force was a good thing in their eyes, but physical force they thought a better. They believed themselves prepared for all contingencies; they imagined themselves ready to shed their blood in support of that which they

never doubted to be good; they dreamed of the crown of martyrdom in their country's service; and, in short, they were political fanatics, though not a small portion of true patriotism lay at the bottom of their yearnings for revolution. On most occasions, the Radicals would join with them, and therefore the Chartists looked upon them for the time as brothers; but the union was not solid, and in more important matters still, the Radicals were disposed to support the Whigs. This fact began to be felt a little before the period at which my tale opens. The Chartists imagined that they perceived a greater sympathy in many points between themselves and the Tories, than between themselves and the Whigs; that there was more real philanthropy, a greater wish to see the condition of the lower classes materially improved, amongst persons of Tory principle, than in any other class. But there were also fundamental differences, which rendered perfect assimilation with them impossible, and though

they regarded the Tories with a kindly feeling, they could not unite with them for any great object.

Such was briefly the state of the town, physical and moral, when the carriage of Sir Arthur Adelon rolled through the gates, which had not been closed for half a century; and a drag having been put on, it began to descend slowly the principal street of the place. In that principal street was situated the small inn called the Rose, which, though there were numerous public-houses, was the only place which kept post-horses, and honoured itself by the name of Hotel. The streets were miserably dark, and nearly deserted, and Sir Arthur Adelon felt a little nervous and uneasy at the thought of what was before him.

In the heat of blood and party strife, men will go boldly and straight-forwardly towards objects pointed out by principles in their own mind, and will seek those objects and assert those principles at the risk of life and fortune,

and all that makes life and fortune desirable. But they proceed upon the same course with very different feelings when, in calmness and tranquillity, after a long cessation of turmoil and contest, they return to the same paths, even though their general views may remain unchanged, and they may think their purposes as laudable as ever.

Such was the case with Sir Arthur Adelon. Perhaps, if one looked closely into his heart, and could see, not only what was in it at the present moment, but what I may call the history of his sensations, we should find that his having embraced the extreme views which he entertained had originated in mortified vanity and an embittered spirit. An early disappointment, acting upon a haughty and somewhat vindictive temper, had soured his feelings towards society in general; and when, shortly afterwards, he had met a check, by the refusal of a peerage which he thought he had well merited, a bitter disgust succeeded towards institutions in which he was excluded from the

high position he had coveted, and he became anxious to throw down other men from a position which he could not attain. It was by no regular process of reasoning from these premises that he arrived at the extremely democratical opinions which he often loudly proclaimed; but the events of his early life gave a general bias to his thoughts, which led him step by step to the violent views which he announced in two contested elections in Yorkshire; and at the present time, though he had sunk into temporary apathy, his notions were not at all moderated even by years and experience. He was not inclined, indeed, to risk so much, or to engage in such rash enterprises, as he might have done in the hasty days of youth; but the long-buried seeds were still in his mind, and it only required warmth and cultivation to make them spring up as green and fresh as ever. Nevertheless, he approached discussions in which he felt he might be carried beyond the point where prudence counselled him to stop, with a great degree of nervous anxiety; and he almost

hoped, as his carriage stopped at the inn door, and no signs of waking life appeared but the solitary lamp over the little portico, that some accident might have prevented the meeting. The next instant, however, a light shone through the glass door, and a waiter appearing, approached the step of the carriage, saying, "The gentleman told me to tell you, Sir Arthur, that he would be back in a few minutes."

The baronet bit his lip—there was now no escaping; and following the waiter to a sitting-room, he ordered some sherry, and took two or three glasses, but they did not raise his spirits. All was silent in the town; not a sound was heard but the sighing of the breeze from the bay, and a faint sort of roar, which might be the wind in the chimney, or the breaking of the sea upon the shore. Solemn and slow, vibrating in the air long after each stroke, the great clock of the old church struck twelve; and Sir Arthur Adelon muttered to himself, "I will not wait, at all events—they cannot

expect me to wait." One, two, three minutes passed by, and the baronet rose, and was approaching the bell, when the foot of the waiter was heard running up the stairs, and the door was opened.

"The gentleman, sir," said the waiter; and entering more slowly, a stout, hard-featured, red-haired man appeared, well dressed, and, though clumsily made, not of an ungentlemanly appearance. Sir Arthur had never seen his face before, and gazed on him with some surprise; but the stranger waited till the door was closed again, and then advancing, with a slight bow, he said, "Sir Arthur Adelon, I believe?"

"The same, sir," replied the baronet. "I expected to find another gentleman here. May I ask whom I have the honour of addressing?"

"My name, sir, is Mac Dermot," replied the stranger; "and my friend, Mr. Norries, who is probably the person you allude to,

would have been here to receive you, but being detained with some preliminary business, he requested me to come hither, and be your guide a little farther in the town."

The name given was information sufficient to Sir Arthur Adelon regarding the person before him. He saw one of the chief leaders of the great, though somewhat wild and ill-directed movement in which he himself had taken, as yet, a very inconsiderable part. He felt that his very communication with such a man compromised him in a high degree; and he was anxious to ascertain how much Mac Dermot really knew of his affairs before he proceeded farther. He therefore slowly drew on his gloves, and took up his hat, saying, "I am very happy to see you, Mr. Mac Dermot. I suppose my old acquaintance, Mr. Norries, has made you acquainted with the various circumstances in which he has been connected with me?"

"Not particularly," replied his companion.

"He has informed us that he acted for some time as your solicitor, when you were residing in Yorkshire; and he has laid before us the report of several speeches which you made at that time, with which, I may add, I was myself well acquainted before; but which has given great satisfaction to every one present, from the prospect of seeing a gentleman of such rank and influence, and one who can so eloquently express our own exact sentiments, likely to be united with us once more in advocating the cause of the people against those who oppress them.—Will you permit me to lead the way?"

Sir Arthur Adelon had marked every word that was spoken with peculiar attention, and Mac Dermot's reply was a great relief to him. Norries had not mentioned the power he had over him, and moreover the words 'advocating the cause of the people' seemed to him to imply that nothing of a violent or physical nature was intended; and that all the leaders of the

movement had in view was, to endeavour to strengthen themselves in public opinion by argument and by moral force.

He therefore followed with a lighter step, and was conducted through several narrow and tortuous streets and back lanes, to a house which presented no very imposing appearance, as far as it could be discovered in the darkness of the night. The door was low and narrow, and stood ajar; and when Mac Dermot pushed it open, and Sir Arthur saw the passage by a light which was at the other end, he said to himself, "There can be no very formidable meeting here, for there does not seem to be room for a dozen men in the whole house." He was conducted through the passage to a staircase as narrow, which led to a long sort of gallery, running round what seemed a stable-yard, at the end of which was a door, which Mac Dermot held open for his companion to pass. When Sir Arthur had gone through, his guide closed the door and locked it, and

then saying, "This way, sir," led him to another door, at which a man was standing immovable, with a lamp in his hand. There Mac Dermot knocked, and the door was unlocked and opened from within.

The next moment Sir Arthur Adelon found himself in a very large, low-ceilinged, ill-shaped room, with a long table in the midst. There were several tallow candles round about, emitting a most disagreeable odour, and casting a red, glaring, unsatisfactory light upon the faces of between thirty and forty men, seated at the board in various attitudes. At the head of the table, in an arm-chair, appeared Norries, such as I have described him before; but any attempt to paint the other groups in the room would be vain, for every sort of face, form, and dress which England can display was there assembled, from the sharp, shrewd face of long-experienced age, to the delicate features of the beardless lad; from the stout and stalwart form of the hardy yeoman, to the sickly and feeble

frame of the over-tasked artizan of the city. Here appeared one in the black coat and white neck-cloth usually worn by the ministers of religion; there, a man in the garb of a mechanic: in one place, a very spruce blue satin handkerchiefed gentleman, with yellow gloves, and close by him another, who was apparently a labouring blacksmith, with his hands brown and sooty from the forge. An elderly man, in a well-worn flaxen wig, and large eyes like black cherries, might have passed, by his dress, for a very small country attorney, and opposite to him sat a broad-shouldered man of six foot two, in a blue coat, leather breeches, and top-boots—probably some large farmer in the neighbourhood of the town.

Two seats were reserved on each side of the chairman; and while Mac Dermot locked the door again, and every person present rose, Sir Arthur Adelon—with his stately step and aristocratic air, but, if the truth must be told, with a good deal of disgust and some anxiety at

heart—walked up to the head of the table, shook hands with Norries, and took one of the vacant chairs. The other was immediately occupied by Mac Dermot, and then rising, the chairman said, "Gentlemen, I have the honour of introducing to you Sir Arthur Adelon, whose station and fortune afford the lowest title to your esteem. Far higher in mind than in rank—far richer in generous qualities and in mental endowments than in wealth, he has ever shown himself the friend of that great and majestic body—the people of this country; he has always professed and undauntedly maintained the same opinions which we conscientiously entertain; and he is ready, I am sure, to go heart and hand with us in all just and reasonable measures for the defence of our rights and liberties."

The whole party assembled gave the baronet a cheer, and the sensations with which Sir Arthur had entered began already to wane, even in the first excitement of the moment. Here,

however, I must drop the curtain over a scene of which the reader has probably had enough, and proceed to other events of no less importance in this tale.

CHAPTER XI.

It is the most difficult thing in the world to convey to the mind of a reader the idea of extended space by a rapid sketch. You may say days passed, and weeks; but the reader does not believe a word of it. He takes up the narrative where it left off; an abstract proposition is put before him, and he does not pursue it to any of its consequences. He does not consider for one moment, unless it be clearly explained to him, how those days and those weeks, with all the events which they brought to pass, had wrought upon the characters, the circumstances, and the relative

positions of the personages before him. In a mere sketch with the pencil you can do better: by lighter lines and finer touches, you make distant objects recede; by bolder strokes and stronger delineations, you bring forward the near and the distinct. Nevertheless, I must endeavour to pass over several days rapidly, curtailing every unnecessary description, rejecting every needless detail, and yet dwelling so far upon the several events as to mark to the reader's mind that time was passing, and bearing on its rapid and buoyant flood a multitude of small objects, marking to each individual the progress of time towards eternity.

Day after day was spent at Brandon House in the usual occupations of a country mansion. There were walks, and rides, and drives, and shooting parties; and the fact most important for Charles Dudley was, that he was frequently alone for more than an hour together with Eda Brandon. All was explained, all was promised, all was understood. In less than two months

she would be of age, her hand and her property at her own disposal; and Dudley felt angry at himself from a sensation of regret which he experienced, that he did not still possess the ancient estates of his house, that he might unite himself to her for ever—as pride termed it—upon equal terms.

Those were very, very happy interviews—sometimes over the green lawns or shady groves of the park, sometimes alone in the library or the drawing-room, sometimes sitting side by side near the river, or in the deep wood, and talking with a melancholy pleasure over the past, or looking forward with a cheerful hope unto the future. They wondered sometimes that these communications were so little interrupted, and that nobody observed or attempted to interfere; but Sir Arthur Adelon was frequently absent on business, as he said; Lord Hadley was seized with a passion for roaming about the country, which he had never displayed before; and a sort of

irritable gloom had fallen upon Edgar Adelon, the cause of which he explained to no one, but which was easily seen by the eyes of his cousin. He often sought solitude, shut himself up in his own room, walked, when he went forth, in a different direction from the rest of the party, and seemed involved in thought, even when Eda, and himself, and Dudley, were together without witnesses.

Nevertheless, he was the person who most frequently cut short the interviews of the two lovers, or deprived them of opportunity when the golden fruit was at their lips. He seemed to have conceived a peculiar and extraordinary affection for Lord Hadley's tutor; and there was that confident reliance and unreserved frankness in the friendship he displayed, with which Dudley could not help feeling gratified, and which he could not make up his mind to check, even for the sake of a few more happy moments with Eda Brandon. By fits and starts, the young man would come and

ask him to join him in his walks; would seek his society and his conversation; and would sometimes express his regard—nay, even his admiration—with a warmth and a candour which seemed to Dudley, ignorant of all cause for such sensations in his heart, as savouring too much of childish simplicity for one who was standing at the verge of manhood. His conversation, however, was very interesting—full of wild flights of fancy, rich and imaginative in terms, and overflowing with the deep stream of the heart. He insisted upon it that his companion should call him Edgar, and said that he would always use the name of Dudley; and many a counsel would he ask of him, and listen to his advice with that profound and deep attention which showed that, from some cause or other, reverence had been joined with affection. This extraordinary interest sometimes puzzled Dudley. He would ask himself, could Edgar have perceived the mutual affection of Eda and himself, and could his regard for his fair cousin

have taught him to love whomsoever she loved? But there was no appearance of such perception when they were together: not by a word, not by a smile, not by a quiet jest, did he ever show a knowledge of their affection; and Dudley at length concluded that it was one of those boyish friendships which, suddenly conceived, and nourished by long after-intercourse, often form the basis of lasting regard, which only terminates with life.

Another person, who seemed to have been much struck with Dudley, and who also occupied a good deal of his time, was Mr. Filmer; but, to say the truth, Dudley himself was less pleased with his society than with that of Edgar Adelon. It was always smooth, easy, agreeable. There was not the slightest appearance of effort in his conversation, nothing strained, nothing at all peculiar in his demeanour. He was learned, witty, imaginative; mingling quiet cheerfulness and unobtrusive gaiety with occasional strains of thought so deep and so in-

tense, yet so pellucid and bright, that the hearer was carried away with wonder and delight. He was fond of talking of religious subjects, and with all the many, associated with them by his church. He had a love for, and an intimate acquaintance with, ancient architecture in all its branches; and he combined therewith fancies, hypotheses, or theories, as the reader would have it, which gave a sort of mystical signification to every part and portion of an old building, and spread, as it were, a religious feeling through the conception and the execution of the whole. Every church, or abbey, or cathedral, which had been raised in pure catholic times, was, in his eyes, but a symbol of the spiritual church—a hierarchy, as it were, in stone. He loved sacred music, too. There was not a chant, a canon, an anthem, a mass, or a dirge, that he did not know, and could descant upon eloquently, or sit down and play it with exquisite taste, if no great execution, joining occasionally a power-

ful and melodious voice in snatches of rich song, without the slightest appearance of vanity or display, but merely as if to give the hearer an idea of the composition which he had mentioned.

All this was very charming, but still there was something which made Charles Dudley prefer the frank, free, fearless conversation of Edgar Adelon. He knew not well what that something was; he could not term it a studiedness, but it was all too definite, too circumscribed by rules, too much tied down to purposes and views which allowed no expansion but in peculiar directions. Although there was no affectation, there seemed to be an object in everything he said. There was, in short, a predominant idea to which everything was referable, and which deprived his conversation of that wide and natural range, that free and liberal course, which is one of the greatest charms of friendly intercourse. One felt that—in a very different sense from that in which the

beautiful words were originally used — "he was in the world, but not of the world."

A time came rapidly when much was explained that was at first dark; but we must turn to another of our characters, whose fate was intimately interwoven with that of Charles Dudley. Lord Hadley, as I have said, was frequently absent from Brandon House; and when he was present, there was something in his manner which showed a change of thought or feeling. He attempted to flirt with Eda Brandon—a difficult matter at any time, but more difficult still in the circumstances which existed, and especially when it was done with an effort. His manner towards Dudley, too, was very different. He sought his society but little; was captious in his conversation with him, and somewhat petulant in his replies. He seemed not well pleased when that gentleman was with Eda; and marked his feelings so plainly, that Dudley was sometimes inclined to fear that his pupil had conceived an attach-

ment to the object of his own affection. But then, again, twice when they were sauntering in the park before the house, Lord Hadley made an excuse to leave him and Miss Brandon together, and walked away in the direction of the Grange, remaining absent for two or three hours.

In the meantime, rumours spread, and the newspapers announced that there were threatening signs in the manufacturing districts; that great meetings of artizans were taking place in public and in private; that the people had determined to have what they called "a holiday;" and that some great attempt at popular insurrection was contemplated by those immense masses, which, congregated within a very narrow space, have the means of rapid communication ever open, and whose amount of intelligence is sufficient to make them feel the ills they suffer, and the wrongs they are subject to, without showing them the best means of relieving the one or casting off the other. The prompt and decided

measures of government, too, were detailed in the public prints; the march of different regiments was mentioned; and some portions were displayed of the general plan for suppressing any outbreak which had been formed by the great master of strategy, sufficient to prove to any person, not infatuated by false hopes, that the movements of the people would be effectually checked as soon as ever they transgressed the bounds of law.

To most of the little party assembled at Brandon, these reports came like the roar of the stormy ocean to persons calmly seated by the domestic hearth. They were far removed from the scene of probable strife; they had full confidence in the power and the wisdom of government. There were no manufactories for many miles around; and the nearest point at which there was any great congregation of artizans lay at some twenty or thirty miles distance, where there were both mines and potteries. Nevertheless, Eda observed that

her uncle read with the deepest attention everything that referred to the discontent of the manufacturing population. She saw, too, that he was uneasy; that there was a restlessness and an impatience about him which she could not account for; and she pointed it out to Dudley, who remarked it also. "I have not seen him in this state for years," she said; "and I cannot help thinking that something of great importance must be weighing upon his mind."

"I have heard," replied Dudley, "that at one time he took a very warm, I might almost say vehement, interest in political matters, and went through a contested election in the north, as the advocate of the most extreme pretensions of the people. I have cause to remember that period, dearest Eda, for with that election commenced the ruin of my poor father. He had represented the town for many years in parliament, when your uncle started against him upon principles almost republican. As they had been friends from boyhood, although

the contest was carried on very fiercely by their several supporters, it was conducted with courtesy and kindness by themselves—as much courtesy and kindness, indeed, as could exist under such circumstances between men of the most opposite political principles. My father was returned, but some of the electors thought fit to petition against him, accusing his agents of the most extensive bribery and corruption. As the population was very large and very equally divided in opinion, the expenses of the election itself had been enormous. Innumerable witnesses were brought before the committee on both sides; the investigation lasted for months; the most eminent barristers were retained by enormous fees; and though it ended in my father retaining his seat, an outlay of nearly thirty thousand pounds was incurred by the contest and the petition. To meet this expense, he proposed to mortgage the estates; when your worthy uncle, feeling, perhaps, that his supporters had not treated

my father very well, offered to take the proposed mortgage at a low rate of interest. It was necessary, however, that the title deeds should be closely examined, and they were submitted to the inspection of his lawyer, a scoundrel of the name of Sherborne. This man, who was as keen and acute as he was unprincipled, discovered a flaw in the title; and instead of merely advising your uncle not to take the mortgage, he communicated the fact to another party, and a long law-suit was the consequence, which ended in our being stripped of the property which my grandfather had purchased and paid for. My father was now loaded with a very large debt besides, which he had no means of paying, and his spirits and his health sunk and gave way at once. In these circumstances, Sir Arthur Adelon acted with a degree of kindness which I can never forget. He purchased a very small property, which had descended to me from my mother, at more than its real value, and did not even

wait till I was of age to make the transfer before he paid the money. I had thus the means of comforting and soothing my father during an enforced absence from England and the long period of sickness which preceded his death; and the moment I was of age, I assigned the property to your uncle. Though I had never seen him myself, I wrote to thank him, at my father's death; but he did not answer my letter, and, what is somewhat strange, he has never adverted to the subject since I have been here—perhaps thinking rightly, that it must be a very painful one to me. I have been led into a long story," he continued, "when I only wished to explain to you, that Sir Arthur is known to feel very intensely upon the subject of the people's rights and claims. That he sympathizes deeply with these poor men in the manufacturing districts, there can be no doubt; and I rather think you will find that the anxiety and uneasiness he displays are to be attributed to the interest he feels in them."

Eda mused, but did not reply. She was deeply attached to her uncle, who for many years had acted as a father towards her; but yet she might know his character better than Dudley, and might entertain reasonable doubts as to his being moved by the feelings which that gentleman ascribed to him. She did not express those doubts, however, and the conversation took another turn.

The fifth day of Dudley's stay at Brandon was a Sunday, and it commenced with a tremendous storm of wind and rain. The nearest village church was, as I have shown, at some distance; and Sir Arthur Adelon, though he courteously proposed to order the carriage to carry any of the party who might desire it to the morning's service, added some remarks upon the state of the weather and the likelihood of the servants getting very wet, which prevented any one from accepting his offer. A room had been fitted up at Brandon, and decorated as a chapel; and at the usual hour,

Mr. Filmer appeared, to officiate in the celebration of mass.

Eda Brandon was not present; for, as she informed Dudley, she had promised her mother before her death never to be present at the services of the Roman-catholic church. Lord Hadley and his tutor, however, with less rigid notions, accompanied Sir Arthur and a number of his servants to the chapel; and, somewhat to Dudley's surprise, Mr. Clive and his daughter also appeared soon after, notwithstanding the tempest that was raging without.

Dudley felt a reverence for religion in all its forms; the worship of God was to him always the worship of God; and though he did not affect to adore in a wafer the real presence of his Saviour, he behaved with gravity and decorum through the whole ceremony. Lord Hadley, on the contrary, treated the whole matter somewhat lightly; paid little attention to the

offices of the church; and kept his eyes fixed, during a great part of the service, upon Helen Clive, with a look which was not altogether pleasing to his tutor. Nor did it seem so to Edgar Adelon either; for, when he glanced towards Lord Hadley for a moment, his colour became suddenly heightened, and his eyes flashed fire, giving to Dudley, for the first time, a key to what was passing in his bosom.

After mass was concluded, Sir Arthur took Clive familiarly by the arm, and walking with him into the library, begged him not to think of returning to the Grange with Helen till the storm had passed. Mr. Clive declined to stay, however, saying that he did not feel the weather himself, and that, as he had come up in his own little sociable, Helen would be under cover as she went back. The day passed as other days had done; but during the afternoon, Mr. Filmer paid particular attention to Dudley, and was altogether more cheerful and

entertaining than he had been for some time, as if the services of his religion formed a real pleasure to him, the effect of which remained for several hours after they were over.

CHAPTER XII.

THE morning of the second day of the week once more broke calm and clear, and Dudley was musing in his room on much that had lately passed. From all that he had observed the day before, he feared that the conduct of Lord Hadley towards Helen Clive was not that which he could approve; and although he might have regretted much to leave the society of Eda at that moment, he would not have suffered any personal feeling to prevent him from urging an immediate removal from what he conceived a dangerous position, if he had not recollected that the young nobleman

was so nearly of age as to be very likely to resist any interference. He was considering, therefore, how he should act, when he was again visited in his room by Mr. Filmer, for the purpose of engaging him to take a stroll in the fresh morning air.

With many men, the effect of intense thought and mental anxiety is very great upon the mere body; and Dudley felt heated and almost feverish. He believed, too, that in the course of their ramble he might, perhaps, obtain some farther information regarding his pupil's conduct from the priest; for he well knew that the clergy of the Romish church look upon it almost as a matter of duty to ascertain the facts of every transaction in which any of their flock are concerned. He therefore agreed to the proposal at once; and after they had issued forth into the park, pondered, even while they were conversing, upon the best means of introducing the topic of which he was desirous of speaking.

As they walked on, detached masses of cloud, left by the storm of the preceding day, floated heavily over head; and the shadows and the gleams crossed the landscape rapidly, bringing out many points of beauty, which were not observable either under the broad sunshine of summer, or the cold, grey expanse of the wintry sky.

"The scenery here is certainly very lovely," said Dudley; "and I think that of the park peculiarly so. It is more varied, as well as more extensive, than any park that I have seen in England."

"Yes, it is very beautiful," replied the priest, in a somewhat common-place tone; "and, indeed, the whole property is a very fine one. There are few heiresses in England who can boast of such an estate as Miss Brandon."

"Miss Brandon!" said Dudley, in a tone of some surprise. "Do you mean to say that

she is the owner of this beautiful place? I thought it was the property of her uncle."

The priest turned a short, quick glance to his face, and then replied, in a very marked manner, but yet with a well-satisfied smile, "I am glad to hear you thought so, my young friend; but, in answer to your question, this property is Miss Brandon's. Sir Arthur is only here as her guardian. It was much her mother's wish that she should live with him till her marriage, but, at the same time, she expressed a strong desire that her principal residence should be at Brandon. Sir Arthur is a very conscientious man, and he consequently, having undertaken the task, carries out his sister's views more fully than most men would be inclined to do. The bulk of his own property is in Yorkshire, as I believe you know; but he is not there more than a month in the year. The rest of his time is spent at Brandon or in London."

"May I ask," said Dudley, "what there could be pleasing to you in my believing this property to be Sir Arthur Adelon's?"

Mr. Filmer smiled. "Perhaps," he said, "it might be more courteous to leave your question unanswered than to answer it; but nevertheless I will not affect reserve. I look upon it, in ordinary cases, to be rather a misfortune than otherwise for a young lady to inherit a large fortune. There are three results, each very common. Sometimes her relations and friends arrange and bring about a marriage for her with a man perhaps the least suited to her on the face of the earth—some coarse and wealthy brute—some dissolute peer. At other times, she becomes the prey of a designing sharper; a man probably without honour, honesty, or principle; low in birth and mind as in fortunes. Or if she escapes these perils, and reaches the age of discretion unmarried, from a knowledge of the risks she has escaped, she is filled with suspicions of every gentle-

man who approaches her; doubts the motives of all who profess to love her, and fancies that her wealth, and not her heart, is the object sought. I know not which of these results is most to be deprecated." He made a pause, and then continued, with a smile, "That you did not know the property to belong to her, shows that you can be influenced by no motives but such as must be gratifying to herself."

Dudley cast down his eyes and mused for several moments. He was not at all aware that his conduct towards Eda had been such as to display the secret of their hearts to even the keenest eye; and he was surprised, and not well pleased, to find that it had been penetrated at once by the shrewd priest. As he did not answer, Mr. Filmer went on, with a frank and even friendly tone. "I need not tell you, Mr. Dudley, after what has fallen from me," he said, "that I wish you success, not with any of the rash

enthusiasm of a young man in favour of a friend, but upon calm and due deliberation. You are a gentleman by birth and education; a man of high honour and feeling I sincerely believe you to be, and this Lord Hadley is in no degree fitted for her. Light and volatile as a withered leaf; with no fixed principles, and no strong religious feelings; full of unbridled passions, and appetites that have been pampered from his boyhood; the effect of wealth and high station, those two great touchstones of the human character, will be disastrous to him. He is in the high road now to become a confirmed libertine, and even at the present moment is labouring to destroy the peace of a happy family far more ancient and respectable than his own, and to introduce discord into a peaceful neighbourhood, where, happily, we have few such as himself to stir up the angry feelings of our nature."

"You have touched upon a subject, my dear sir," replied Dudley, who could not help feel-

ing gratified by many of the expressions he had used, "in regard to which I much wished to speak with you; and I was meditating upon the very point when you came into my room. I have remarked for some days past that Lord Hadley has been much absent from the house at which he is visiting, so much so as almost to be discourteous; and yesterday, in the chapel, I could not help observing indications of feelings which I regretted much to see, and in regard to which you have confirmed my suspicions."

"His conduct there was very reprehensible," said Mr. Filmer, in a grave tone. "He spends the time during his long absences from Brandon either in visiting at Mr. Clive's house, or in lying in wait for poor Helen in her walks. His object is not to be mistaken by any one of ordinary sagacity and knowledge of the world; but yet Clive, though a very sensible man, does not perceive it. You must have remarked how blind parents usually are

under such circumstances. He looks upon Lord Hadley as a mere boy, and a frank and agreeable one. He thinks that his visits are to himself; and the young gentleman, with more art than one would have supposed him capable of, takes care to go down to the Grange when he knows that the master is out, and has some excuse ready for waiting till he returns."

"From what you tell me," replied Dudley, "it seems absolutely necessary that one of two courses should be pursued: either I must immediately endeavour to induce Lord Hadley to remove from Brandon—in which case I am afraid he would resist, as in a few weeks he will be of age; or else Mr. Clive must be warned, and take such measures as may put a stop to this young man's visits."

"I do not know that either is necessary," answered Mr. Filmer; "nor would either have the effect that you anticipate. Lord Hadley would not go, or would return to pursue the

same course when he is his own master; and in regard to warning Clive, I should have done it before, had I not known and felt that it might be dangerous to do so. He is a man of a very strong and hasty spirit—resolute, bold, determined, and easily moved by anything that looks like indignity, to bursts of passion of which you can form no idea, never having seen him roused. Neither have I any fear whatsoever for Helen. She is guarded not only by high principle, and a pure and noble heart, but by other feelings, which are often a woman's greatest safeguard. Lord Hadley will then find his designs in vain; and I do not think he would venture to insult her in any way."

Dudley mused for a moment, having learned more of his pupil during their journey on the Continent than he had known when he undertook the task of guiding him. "I do not know," he said, in a doubtful tone—"I do not know."

"He had better not," said Mr. Filmer, sternly; "but be sure, my dear young friend, that there shall be an eye, not easily blinded, on all his actions. The interest you take in this matter raises you more highly in my esteem than ever; and I will own, that I could not help drawing a comparison, very unfavourable to this young lord, between your conduct and his in the chapel yesterday. Reverence to the ceremonies of religion is due even to decency, if not to principle; but there was something more in your demeanour, which gave me good hope that if you would sometimes attend to the various services of our church, receive even but slight instruction in its doctrines, cast from your mind the prejudices of education, and meditate unbiassed over the principal differences between our church and yours—of course, not without full explanation of all our views upon those dogmas which are so erroneously stated by most protestant writers—your conduct gave

me good hope, I say, that under these circumstances you might be regained to that true faith of which many of your ancestors were the greatest ornaments."

Dudley smiled. The secret was now before him. The priest had really conceived the design of converting him; and his full and strong attachment to the Protestant religion, his unhesitating condemnation in his own heart of the errors of the Romish church, made the very idea ridiculous in his eyes. "I fear, my dear sir," he replied, as the slight smile passed away, "that your expectation is altogether vain. There is no chance whatever, let me assure you, of my ever abandoning the religion in which I have been brought up."

"Do not be too sure, my friend," replied Mr. Filmer, smiling also; "I have seen more obstinate heretics than yourself brought to a knowledge of the truth. I do not despair of you at all. You have a mind free from many prejudices which affect others of your religion.

You are not at all bigoted or intolerant; and you view these matters so calmly, and yet devoutly, that with my firm convictions, after much study and thought, I cannot help thinking, if you will but look into the matter fully, you will arrive at a just conclusion."

"I trust, undoubtedly, that such will be the case," was Dudley's answer; "but I believe, my dear sir, that I have arrived at a just conclusion already. It has not been without study either, nor from the showing of Protestant divines, but rather from the works of your own church, many of which I have examined with great care and attention, and which have only strengthened me in my convictions. The more impartial a man is in forming his opinions, and the less vehement and passionate he is in their assertion, the more firm he is likely to be when they are formed, and the more steady in their maintenance."

They had by this time reached the other

side of the park, and passing through a little wicket-gate, were entering the road beyond the walls. Mr. Filmer's lips were compressed as he listened, and he seemed to struggle against some strong emotion; but just at that moment the tramp of numerous feet was heard, and looking up the road, they saw a multitude of people, in the dress of country labourers and working men, advancing at a quick pace, two and two, in an orderly and decorous manner. Mr. Filmer and his companion paused to let them pass; and as they went by, talking together, Filmer could not help remarking, that in the countenances of many there was a stern and thoughtful, and in others an enthusiastic and excited expression, which seemed to indicate that they were engaged in no ordinary occupation. They passed on without taking any notice of the two gentlemen, although two or three times Dudley heard the name of Sir Arthur Adelon mentioned amongst

them; and when the last had gone by, he inquired, not unwilling to change the matter of their conversation, "Who can these men be, and what can be their object in this curious sort of array?"

"I really do not know," answered Mr. Filmer; "but it would not surprise me if they were Chartists."

"Have you many of them here?" asked Dudley.

"Oh, yes; they are very numerous," replied the priest, "both amongst the peasantry and the town's-people, and these may very likely be going to some of their meetings on the downs. They are all very orderly and quiet in our county, however, and, indeed, form the best behaved and most respectable part of our population. A great enthusiasm is very often extremely useful. The men who feel it are often restrained thereby from anything low or base, or degrading to the great principle which

moves them. Such, my young friend, ought to be the power of religion upon the heart; and such it is, as you must have yourself seen, with a great many of the ecclesiastics of the church to which I belong. Base and bad men may be found in every country, and will disgrace every creed; but I cannot help thinking you will find, if you will really read and study some works which I will lend you, that the natural tendency of every doctrine of the Catholic religion is to elevate and purify the hearts of men, and to mortify and subdue every corrupt affection. I know," he continued, "that the exact reverse has been stated by Protestant writers, but they have been mistaken—I will not use a harsher term, and will only add, study, and you will see."

"I will certainly read the books with great pleasure," replied Dudley; "but, at the same time, I must not lead you to expect, for one moment, that they will make any change in my opinions."

He spoke in the most decided tone; and Mr. Filmer replied, with a slight contraction of the brows, and a very grave and serious manner, "Then I fear your dearest hopes will be disappointed."

Dudley felt somewhat indignant at the implied threat; but he was prevented from answering by the appearance of Lord Hadley, who came towards them — not from the side of Brandon—and who, instantly joining them, returned in their company towards the house, affecting an exuberant degree of gaiety, and laughing and jesting in a manner which harmonized ill with the more serious thoughts of his two companions. The subject of the mass, at which they had been present the day before, was accidentally introduced in the course of their conversation, which thence deviated to the ceremonies of the Roman-catholic religion in other countries; and the young peer said, laughing, "If it were not for its mummeries,

Mr. Filmer, I should think it a very good religion too, a capital religion. It is so pleasant to think that one can shuffle off all one's peccadilloes on the shoulders of another man, that I wonder who would not be a Roman catholic, if he could."

A scowl, momentary, but fiend-like, crossed the countenance of the priest; and Dudley, who had observed it, was surprised to hear him say, the next moment, with a bland smile, "You are a little mistaken in your views, my lord; and I think, if you would examine the subject well, under a competent instructor, you would not find it so difficult a thing to be a Roman catholic as you imagine."

"I should prefer an instructress," answered Lord Hadley, with a laugh; but Mr. Filmer did not reply, finding it, perhaps, somewhat difficult to guide his arguments between two men of such totally different characters and views as the young lord and his tutor. The

rest of their walk back through the park passed almost in silence; but from various indications Dudley judged that the previous gaiety of Lord Hadley had been more affected than real.

CHAPTER XIII.

To a person inexperienced in the ways of life and in human character, it might seem strange that a man should pursue one woman with every appearance of passion, and should yet, at the same time, not only seek the love of another, but also entertain some feeling of jealousy at any sign of favour for a rival. But yet this is the case every day, and it was so with Lord Hadley. Had he been asked whether he admired Helen Clive or Eda Brandon most, he would have replied, if he answered sincerely, "Helen Clive;" but she was in his eyes

merely a plaything, to be possessed, to sport with, and to cast away; while Eda was looked upon in a very different light—to add wealth to his wealth; to flatter his vanity by the display of her beauty and her grace as his wife; to gratify his pride by uniting the blood of the Brandons, one of the oldest families in the land, to that of the Hadleys, who, to say the truth, required not a little to graft their young plant upon a more ancient stock. Whatever feelings he entertained for her certainly did not reach the height of passion; but yet, when he was beside her, he evidently sought to win regard, and it was plain that he by no means liked the preference she showed for Dudley.

Sir Arthur Adelon saw that something had gone amiss with his young and noble guest; and while they were sitting at luncheon, with not the most placable of feelings existing on the part of Lord Hadley towards his tutor,

Sir Arthur was considering what could be the cause of the coldness and haughtiness of tone which he remarked, when a servant entering, announced to Mr. Dudley that a gentleman of the name of Norries wished to speak with him for a few moments in the library.

Sir Arthur instantly turned deadly pale; but recovering himself in a moment, he started up before his guest could reply, saying, "I beg you ten thousand pardons, Mr. Dudley; but I have something of much importance to say to Mr. Norries, and if you will permit me, I will take up his time for a moment or two while you finish your luncheon, as I have got business which will call me out immediately, and perhaps your conversation with him may be somewhat long."

Dudley was replying that he really did not know what business Mr. Norries could have with him, as he knew no such person, when, with a familiar nod, Sir Arthur said, "I will

not detain him three minutes," and hurried out of the room, followed by the keen, cold eye of the priest.

"Who is Mr. Norries, father?" inquired Eda Brandon. "I never heard of him before."

"An old acquaintance of Sir Arthur's," replied Mr. Filmer, in a common-place tone. "He was once a lawyer, I believe, and too honest a man for a profession from which he retired some time ago."

Not two minutes elapsed before Sir Arthur Adelon was in the room again. His conference with Mr. Norries had been short indeed; but it seemed to have been satisfactory, for when he returned, his lip wore a smile, although his face was now a good deal flushed, as if from some recent and great excitement.

"You will find Norries in the library, Mr. Dudley," said the baronet, as soon as he entered; and while Dudley rose and walked to

the door, Sir Arthur seated himself at the table, and fell into deep thought.

In the meantime, Dudley proceeded to the room to which he had been directed, and found there, waiting his arrival, the same powerful, hard-featured man whom I have before described.

The keen grey eyes of Norries were fixed upon the door, and when Dudley entered, a slight flush passed over his cheek. "Mr. Dudley," he said; "there is no mistaking you. You are very like your father."

"I believe I am, Mr. Norries," replied Dudley—"pray be seated. You were well acquainted with my poor father, I presume."

"No, I had not that honour, sir," answered Norries; "I have seen him more than once, however, as the partner of Mr. Sherborne, the Yorkshire solicitor of Sir Arthur Adelon."

Dudley's face grew stern, and he made a movement as if to rise, but refrained, merely

saying, "Mr. Sherborne's name, sir, is an unpleasant one to me. I should not like to speak my opinion of him to his partner; but were he still living, I should undoubtedly let him hear it in person."

"I was his partner, sir, in business, but not in rascality," replied Norries, "the full extent of which I did not know till he was dead. Nature did not make me for a lawyer, Mr. Dudley; and the result of my study of the profession has been to show me that, either by errors in their original formation, or by perversions which have crept in through the misinterpretations of judges, the laws of this land do not afford security against injustice, redress for wrongs committed, protection to the innocent, punishment to the guilty, or equity in any of the relations between man and man. With this view of the case, I could not remain in a profession which aided to carry out, in an iniquitous manner, iniquitous laws, and I therefore quitted it. Before I did so, however, it became

my task to examine all the papers in the office of my deceased partner and myself, many of which I had never seen or heard of before. In so doing, sir, I found some which affected your father; and amongst others, several letters of his, apparently of importance. The latter you shall have; the other papers, relating to a contested election in which he took part, are at present necessary to myself."

"I feel much obliged to you, Mr. Norries," replied Dudley. "Of course I shall feel glad to have my poor father's letters. In regard to the other papers relative to the election, as that has been a business long settled, they can be of no service to me, and I do by no means wish to recal old grievances. I am now in the house of my father's opponent on that occasion, and I am well aware that he then acted honourably, and afterwards most liberally and kindly to my poor father."

Norries knit his brows, and shut his teeth tight, but he suffered no observation to escape

him; and Dudley continued, saying, "I do not, therefore, wish for one moment to revive any unpleasant memories connected with that contest, and think the papers referring to it just as well in your hands as in mine. Was this the only matter you wished to speak to me upon?"

"I have nothing farther to say, Mr. Dudley," replied Norries, rising, "but that I will in a few days send your father's letters to you at any place you please to mention." And after having received Mr. Dudley's address at St. John's College, Cambridge, he took his leave. Once he stopped for a moment as he was going out—thought, muttered something to himself, but without adding anything more, departed.

On quitting Brandon House, Norries made his way straight to the avenue which I have mentioned once or twice before; and walking hurriedly down under the shade of the trees, he turned into a path which led through the copse on the right to a stile over the wall. His direction was towards the Grange, but he did

not follow exactly the same road which had been pursued by Edgar Adelon. About a hundred yards up the lane, there lay the entrance of another narrow footway, which was sunk deep between two banks, with a hedge at the top, forming an exceedingly unpleasant and dangerous cut in the way of any horseman following the fox-hounds; and indeed there was a tradition of two gentlemen having broken their necks there some fifty years ago, in consequence of having come suddenly upon this unseen hollow way, in leaping the hedge above. Along it, however, Mr. Norries now sped with a quick step, till it opened out upon a little green, where stood two cottages in a complete state of ruin, to arrive at which more easily from the high road, the path had probably been cut in former years. On the other side of the green, mounting over the bank and passing through the fields, was a more open footway, with a stile at the bottom of the descent, upon which was sitting, when Norries came up, a

short, slightly-made man, with a sharp face, and keen, eager, black eyes. "Well, Nichols," said Norries, approaching, "I have not kept you long."

"No, no," answered the other man, quickly; "but what news—what news, Mr. Norries? What does he say?"

"Why, he will come, Nichols, whenever we give the word," answered Norries, "without hesitation or delay."

"Indeed!" exclaimed the other—"better news than I thought. I feared he was shirking, from what he said last time, or else that he would take so long to consider, that we should lose our opportunity."

"I took means to quicken his decision," said Norries. "But let us get on, Nichols, for I expect Conway and Mac Dermot to join me at Clive's, for a consultation; and we must then separate till to-morrow night."

"Is Clive's a safe place?" asked Nichols, following, as the other strode on rapidly. "He is dead against us, you know, Norries."

"But he would not betray any man," replied the other; "and besides, he is out at the town, and will not be back for two or three hours."

Nothing farther was said till they reached the Grange, where, going in without ceremony, Norries put his head into Helen's drawing-room, saying, "I can go into the up-stairs room which I had before, Helen dear, I suppose?"

"Oh, certainly!" answered Helen. "Everything is there just as you left it; but my father is not at home, and will not return for some hours."

"That does not matter," answered Norries; and calling one of the maids, he told her, if any gentlemen came to inquire for him, to show them up stairs to him; and mounting the steps, he led the person called Nichols into the room where his conference had been held with Sir Arthur Adelon. Helen in the meantime remained below, unoccupied, apparently,

with anything but thought, for though there was a book open before her, she seldom looked at it. She was seated with her face to the window, which commanded a view of the garden, and through the trees across the river to the opposite side of the little dell in which it flowed. With one arm in a sling, and the other resting across the book upon the table, she gazed forth from the window, watching that opposite bank with an anxious, almost apprehensive expression of countenance, and if she dropped her eyes to the page for a moment, she raised them again instantly. Hardly three minutes had passed after Norries' arrival, when a figure was indistinctly seen coming over the slope, and Helen, starting up, exclaimed, "There he is again! This is really too bad. I am glad my uncle is here!" But before the words were well uttered, the figure came more fully in sight, and Helen saw that it was that of a perfect stranger. Another, equally unknown to her, followed close behind

the first; and she sat down again, murmuring, with a slight smile, "I frighten myself needlessly.—But it is really very hard to be so treated—I do not know what to do. If I were to tell my father what he had said, and how he had treated me, he would kill him on the spot; and if I told Edgar all, they would fight, I am sure. Poor, dear, generous Edgar! I can see he is very uneasy, and yet I dare not speak. It is very strange that Father Peter should treat the matter with such indifference—I believe my best way would be to tell my uncle."

As she thus went on murmuring broken sentences, the two men whom she had seen approached the house, rang the bell, and Helen could hear their heavy footsteps mount the stairs.

She had turned her head towards the door when they came into the house; but the moment that her eyes were directed towards the window again, she saw the figure of Lord Hadley, coming down the path with a

proud, light, self-confident step, and instantly starting up once more, she closed the book, and ran out of the room. A maid was in the passage, and, in an eager and frightened tone, the beautiful girl exclaimed, "Tell him exactly what I said, Margaret. If he asks for me, say I will not see him. Make no excuses, but tell him plainly and at once, I will not."

"That I will, Miss Helen," answered the woman, heartily. "Shall I ask Ben the ploughman to thrash him if he wont go away?"

If Helen had uttered the reply that first rose in her mind, her words would have been, "I wish to heaven you would;" but she refrained, and saying, "No—no violence, Margaret," she ran up stairs to her own room, and seated herself near a little table, after locking the door.

What passed below she could not hear; but between that chamber and the next was a partition of old dark oak, not carved into panels, as in the rooms below, but running in long polished planks from the ceiling to the floor,

with the edges rounded into mouldings, for the sake of some slight degree of ornament. They were tightly joined together, but still the words of any one speaking in a loud tone in the one room, could be heard in the other; and it seemed to Helen, from the pitch to which two or three of the voices were elevated, that one of the party at least in her uncle's chamber was somewhat hard of hearing. Her thoughts, for a moment or two after she entered, were too much agitated for her to pay any particular attention; but all remained still below, and she said to herself, "He has gone in to wait for my father—or to sit down and rest himself, as he pretends, I dare say. I wonder how a gentleman can have recourse to such false excuses—and here I must be kept a prisoner till he chooses to go."

As she thus thought, some words from the neighbouring room caught her ear, and instantly fixed her attention. It was without design she listened—by an impulse that was irresistible.

Her cheek turned paler than it was before; her lips parted with eagerness and apparent anxiety; and she put her hand to her brow, murmuring, "Good Heaven! I hope my father has no share in all this! I will go down upon my knees to him, and beg him not to meddle with it." But the next moment other words were spoken, and the look of terror passed away from her beautiful face like a dark cloud from a summer sky. Then again the name of Sir Arthur Adelon was mentioned frequently, and again the cloud came over Helen's fair brow; but now there was surprise mingled with fear, for it was marvellous to her, that a man of great wealth, station, and respectability, should be implicated so deeply in the schemes which she heard.

About half an hour passed in this manner, and then the maid came up and tapped at her door, saying, "He is gone, Miss Helen;" and the fair prisoner, glad to be released, opened her door and descended to the room below.

"What shall I do? How shall I act?" was Helen's first thought. "To betray them to justice I cannot, I must not; but yet it is very horrible. There will be terrible bloodshed!—And Sir Arthur Adelon, too—who could ever have suspected that he would join them? Oh! I wish he could be warned—I will tell Eda. She has more power over him than any one, and he may be persuaded to refrain.—My uncle will have his course—nothing will turn him, I am sure, and he will ruin himself utterly in the end; but I do hope and trust he will have no influence over my father.—Oh, no! the men said he would have nought to do with it.—But hark!"

There were steps heard descending. Two or three people quitted the house, and after a lapse of a few minutes, Norries entered the room with a calm, even cheerful countenance, and seated himself beside Helen.

"What is the matter, little pet?" he said. "You look sad and anxious. Is your arm paining you, my dear?"

"Oh, no!" replied Helen; "it has never pained me at all since it was set. I think it is quite well now."

"Who was that came in about half an hour ago?" asked Norries, somewhat abruptly. "I heard the bell ring, and a man's foot in the passage."

"It was Lord Hadley," answered Helen, colouring a little at the very mention of his name. "He came in to wait for my father, I suppose, or upon some such excuse."

"My dear Helen," said Norries, laying his hand quietly upon hers, "have nought to do with him—see him as little as possible; for though to suspect you, my dear child, of anything that is wrong, is quite out of the question for those who know you, yet the frequent visits of men who, in our bad state of society, hold a rank far superior to your own, and especially of such a dissolute, thoughtless youth as this, may injure your fair fame with those who do not know you."

The kindly tone in which he spoke encouraged Helen; and looking up in his face, she said, "This is a subject on which I much wish to speak to you, for I dare not tell my father. I did not see Lord Hadley, my dear uncle, for I went to my own room the moment I saw him coming, and ordered the maid to tell him, if he asked for me, that I *would* not see him—in those plain terms."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Norries, now much interested; "then he must have done something very wrong, Helen."

"He has said things to me which I cannot repeat, my dear uncle," she replied, with a glowing face. "He wanted to persuade me to leave my father's house, and go away to London with him; and—and—he has behaved very ill to me, in short."

"Did he dare?" exclaimed her uncle, with his eyes flashing, and his cheek turning red. "Your father must know this, Helen."

"Oh! no, no!" cried Helen Clive; "I dare

not tell him, indeed. I am sure if he knew all he would kill him on the spot. You know how very violent he is when he is made angry, and how angry he would be if he knew I had been insulted as I have been."

"I do know it well, Helen," replied Norries, thoughtfully, "and I will acknowledge yours is a difficult position. Your are no coquette, my dear child, to give this man any encouragement, even at the first, before he had shown himself in his true colours; and I feel sure you have done your best to keep him from the house."

"Indeed I have," replied Helen Clive; "I have never liked him from the first, though I felt gratitude for the kindness which I received from him and his friend Mr. Dudley, and expressed it. But, oh! how different has Mr. Dudley's conduct ever been. It was to him, indeed, I owed my safety, though the other was kind also at the time; but the very night when they had brought me here, he looked at me in

a way—I cannot describe it—but it made me feel very uncomfortable."

"And Mr. Dudley has been always kind?" asked her uncle.

"I cannot tell you how kind," answered Helen. "His manner was so gentle, so like a gentleman; and he seemed to feel so much for me in every way, both when he was extricating me from the heap of stones and earth, and afterwards when I was anxious to let my father know what had happened, that I can never forget it; and then, when I saw him the day after, there was such a difference between his conduct and Lord Hadley's, that in any moment of danger I would have clung to him like a brother, while I shrunk from the other's very look.—I did not know why then; but I know now."

"It is like the race of Dudley," replied Norries, and leaning his head upon his hand, he fell into deep and seemingly bitter thought.

"How men may be led into great errors!" he exclaimed at length. "Helen, your father must know of all this; but I will tell him, and tell him why you dared not. That in itself will act as a check upon him; for with high hearts like his, to see the consequences of their passions is to regret them. But fear not, little pet, I will take care to tell him, when he will have time for calm thought before he can act.—Helen, it must be! A daughter must not show a want of confidence in her father."

"I would not for the world," replied Helen Clive; "but oh! take care, my dear uncle; for I tremble to think of the consequences."

"I will take care, poor thing," said Norries; "although, dear Helen, we must never think of consequences where a matter of right and duty is concerned; and now farewell." Thus saying, he took his departure, and left her, with an anxious mind and agitated heart, to await the coming events.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE afternoon had been clear, and even warm. Every cloud had passed away from the sky; and when, about a quarter to six, Eda Brandon retired to her own room to dress for dinner, the sun—set about a quarter of an hour before—had left the sky all studded with stars. She was fond of seeing the heavens, and the curtains of her windows were not drawn; so that while she sat at her toilette table, with the maid dressing her beautiful hair, she could gaze out at the orbs of light in the firmament, which was spread like a scroll written with characters of fire before her eyes.

It was very dark, however, for — as the reader learned in moons will comprehend from what was said at the beginning of this work—the fair planet of the night had not yet risen; and as Eda continued to gaze, there suddenly shot up through the obscurity what seemed a bright, rushing ball of fire; then pausing, suspended as it were in the air for a moment, it burst into a thousand glittering sparks, which descended slowly towards the earth again.

"What can that be?" exclaimed Eda.

"La! ma'am, it's a rocket," said the maid. "I shouldn't wonder, if it was some of those Chartist people's signals. They are making a great stir about here just now, I can tell you, Miss Eda; and I am getting horribly afraid for what will happen next."

"Do you mean to say that such things are taking place in this neighbourhood?" inquired Eda, in some surprise. "I think you must be

confounding the reports from the manufacturing districts."

"Oh dear, no, ma'am!" replied the maid. "My brother, who is servant with Mr. Gaspey, told me yesterday, that he had seen full fifty of them marching across, two and two, to some of their meetings; and he and his master both think we shall have a row—La! there goes another rocket—it's their doings, depend upon it."

"That cannot be," answered Eda. "Those rockets are thrown up from the sea. I should not wonder if it was some ship in distress. Open the window, and listen if there are guns."

The maid obeyed, but all was silent, though the wind blew dead upon the coast; and Eda, finishing her toilette, descended to the drawing-room.

A number of the neighbouring gentry had been invited to dine at Brandon on that day;

and the table was well-nigh full. As soon as that pause, in devouring took place which usually succeeds when people have eaten fully sufficient to satisfy the hungry man, and have nothing left but to pamper the epicure, conversation, which was very slack before, became animated upon the subject of the movements which were taking place in different parts of the country, of the designs of the Chartists, and of the danger of "the people's holiday" terminating in anarchy and bloodshed.

Eda watched her uncle, for she knew well that he entertained opinions upon political subjects very different from those of the gentlemen by whom he was surrounded. Sir Arthur changed colour several times while the subject was under discussion; but at length a young military man, with somewhat rash impetuosity, exclaimed, "Depend upon it, this is a disease that wants blood-letting. A few inches of cold iron, applied on the first attack, will soon cut it short."

Sir Arthur fired at the speech, and replied, warmly, "My opinion is totally different, sir. If it be a disease at all, it is one of those that are salutary in the end, and likely to clear off a mass of evils which have accumulated in the pursy and pampered onstitutionc of this country.—But," he continued, in a more moderate tone, "as the opinions at the table are very wide apart, it may be wise to avoid politics."

"Perhaps so," replied the young officer, with a courteous inclination of the head; and the subject dropped, much to Eda's relief.

She was destined, however, in the course of that evening to meet with a new subject of anxiety and annoyance. Lord Hadley, without actually getting at all tipsy, took enough wine after dinner to render him overbearing and irritable; and when Dudley seated himself beside her for a moment in the drawing-room, and said a few words to her in a low tone, the young peer instantly cut across their conversation, and, in a haughty and domineering

manner, gave a flat contradiction to something which his tutor had asserted.

Although of an amiable, and usually of a placable disposition, Dudley instantly retorted in severe terms — his growing contempt for the young peer overcoming his ordinary command over himself. Lord Hadley's words grew high, and tones loud; Edgar Adelon and the young officer, who had been one at the dinner-table, drew near; and the former listened with evident satisfaction to the severe castigation which the peer received at the hands of Mr. Dudley. It was given without loss of temper, but yet with an unsparing and a powerful hand; and the young man, almost furious, exposed himself every moment more and more, while the contemptuous smile of Edgar Adelon rendered his punishment still more bitter. The presence of Miss Brandon acted as a certain restraint; and as the eyes of several ladies in the room turned upon them,

Lord Hadley, with a burning heart and a flushed cheek, turned away and left the room, while Edgar, with a laugh, muttered, "It will do him good;" and Dudley calmly resumed his conversation with Eda.

Miss Brandon, however, was herself much agitated and alarmed; and in the course of the evening, as the company from time to time broke into different groups, she took the opportunity of saying, at a moment when they were unobserved, "For pity's sake, Edward, do not let the dispute go any farther with that foolish young man. Remember, he is but a boy, in mind at all events, and really unworthy of your notice."

"Oh! fear not, dear Eda," replied Dudley; "for your sake, if for nothing else, I would not suffer such an idle dispute to deviate into a direct quarrel. But the relations between him and me must be immediately altered. As long as he thought fit to demean himself as a gen-

tleman and a man of honour, there seemed to be nothing degrading in the position that I held. Now, however, the case is different."

Other persons coming up, prevented their farther conversation, and when the guests had taken their leave, Eda retired, not to rest, but to think over events which were the cause of no slight anxiety. Slowly undressing, she dismissed her maid, and sitting down before the table, wrapped in her dressing-gown, meditated painfully over the probable result. The moments often fly fast in thought as well as in activity; and Eda, in surprise, heard a clock which stood near her door strike one, while she was still sitting at the table. She rose to go to bed, but at that moment a curious sound caught her ear. It seemed to proceed from the park, and was that of a dull, heavy tramp, sometimes sounding louder, sometimes softer, sometimes distinctly measured, sometimes varied into a mere rustle. It struck her as very curious; and although she tried to persuade

herself that it was a herd of deer passing over the gravel in the avenue, yet she was not satisfied, and proceeding to a window, drew back the curtains, and gazed out.

The moon was not yet to be seen in the sky, but still her approaching light shed a certain degree of lustre before her. The night was certainly clearer than it had appeared shortly after sunset, and the stars were more faint and pale. From the left-hand side of the park, moving rapidly across the wide open space in front of the house, at a distance of not more than a hundred yards, a stream of dark human figures was seen, tending towards the opposite side, where the stile led down into the little valley with the stream and the old priory. There seemed to be between two and three hundred men, principally walking two and two; but every here and there in the line, they were gathered into a little knot, and apparently carrying some heavy mass upon their shoulders. At one spot within sight they

halted, and one of the burdens which they carried was shifted to the shoulders of fresh bearers, displaying to the eyes of Eda, as the change was effected, an object which, to imagination, looked much like the form of a man. It seemed very heavy, however, and took at least eight or ten persons to carry it. It required some time, too, to move it from one set of shoulders to another; and when the party marched on again, Eda said to herself, "This must be a train of those misguided men, the Chartists. How bold of them to come across the park! I trust my uncle has nothing to do with them—but I almost fear it."

Even as the thought passed through her mind, a single figure came forth from the terrace just below her, and followed upon the track of the others. The form, however, was too slight and graceful for that of Sir Arthur Adelon. It was that of a young and lightly made man; and Eda at once recognised her cousin Edgar.

The moment she did so, she threw open the window, and leaning out, spoke to him in a low voice. "What is all this, Edgar?" she said. "Who are those men, and what are they about?"

"I do not know, pretty cousin," he answered; "but I am going to see."

"Oh! for Heaven's sake, take care," cried Eda. "You had better take no notice of them. There were two or three hundred men, and they may murder you."

"Pooh! pooh!" answered Edgar. "Go to bed, Eda, dear; you will catch cold, and then somebody will scold me to-morrow;" and away he walked after the party of men, which he also had seen from his room as he sat meditating near the window. The intruders seemed to know the park tolerably well; but Edgar Adelon knew it better; and, cutting off an angle here, and taking a short turn there—by a hawthorn bush—round a clump of chestnuts—through a copse—over a rise, he contrived

to come in sight of them continually, without being seen himself, till at length they reached the stone stile, and paused around it in an irregular mass. The young gentleman was at that moment standing with his back against a large horse-chestnut tree, and he could not at all make out the manœuvres that followed. Some of the men stood upon the top of the stile, and seemed, with great labour and difficulty, to lift a large and very weighty object over the wall. Then came another effort of the same kind, and then the men began to pass rapidly into the road beyond the park.

As soon as the last had disappeared, young Edgar Adelon darted out of his place of concealment, and followed; but by the time he reached the lane, although the moon had now risen, not a trace of the mob could be discovered; and he was turning away to the left, when suddenly a murmur of voices from the copse and valley below showed him the direction which those he sought had taken. There

were ways through that copse only known to himself and the gamekeepers—unless, indeed, some of the neighbouring poachers were as learned in its recesses;—but following one of these paths, he soon came within sight of the open space before the old priory, and a strange scene presented itself to his eyes. Full two hundred men were there assembled, some sitting on fragments of the old ruin, some sauntering idly about the little green, some bathing their hands in the stream, which sparkled not only in the light, pure and pale, of the newly-risen moon, but in that of two or three torches, which had by this time been lighted. In the centre, however, there was a group of some thirty persons, more busily employed, in the midst of whom shone the torches I have mentioned; and by their glare, Edgar now perceived, for the first time clearly, the heavy objects which the men had carried, and saw what they were now doing with them. Two small field-pieces, apparently of brass,

lay upon the ground, detached from their carriages, which had been taken to pieces, and which the mob were putting busily together. A good deal of skill was shown in the task, and no slight eagerness appeared in the rough, bronzed countenances of the men around, as they looked on or assisted from time to time. The fixing the carriages together was soon complete, and then came the more laborious work of slinging the cannon, and adjusting them in their proper position. This was not accomplished without difficulty, but it was at length complete; and Edgar Adelon felt inclined to turn away and go back to the house, when suddenly a loud voice exclaimed, "Now run them back into those dark nooks, and gather round and hear a word or two."

Eight or ten men instantly applied themselves to drag the field-pieces into the recesses of the building, and then came forth again, gathering round the person who had spoken. He then placed himself upon a large mass

of fallen masonry, and in a loud, clear tone, and with powerful and energetic language, pronounced an harangue, which gave to Edgar Adelon the astounding information that his father was looked upon as the leader of the rash men he saw before him, and their future guide and support in schemes which seemed to his fresh young mind nothing but mere madness. A part, at least, of their plans and purposes was displayed; and with a heart filled with terror and anxiety for his father, Edgar Adelon made his way out of the copse, to return to Brandon House, asking himself how he should act, and resolving to consult the priest as soon as he could see him on the following morning.

CHAPTER XV.

WHAT a whimsical thing is that strange composition — man. The very elements of his nature war against each other, though bound together by hoops of steel. The spirit and the body are continually at variance, and the activity of the one often renders the other inert. Eda Brandon could not sleep after Edgar Adelon left her; her imagination, ever busy, presented to her continually scenes the most fearful and the most terrible, where the gibbet, and the axe, and the deadly shot were seen and heard; and her uncle's form appeared as a criminal, freed for an hour or two from dark imprison-

ment, to endure the torture of a public trial. She judged of all she knew as a woman judges—with keen foresight and penetration, but without sufficient experience to make that penetration available. But still her fancy was busy, and it kept her waking. For more than one hour she did not sleep; but still she tried hard to do so, for she proposed to rise early on the following morning, when she knew that those whom she had determined to consult as to all the questions before her would be up. But such resolutions are vain. Fatigue and exhaustion imperatively counselled repose; and at length, when her eyes closed, notwithstanding all her determinations to watch, she went on in a profound slumber for more than one hour after her usual time of rising.

A morning of hurry and anxiety succeeded. Dudley had already gone out with the gamekeepers and Edgar to shoot; Lord Hadley was still in bed; Mr. Filmer had been summoned to a dying man at daybreak.

Sir Arthur ate his breakfast absorbed in journals and papers; and Eda, though she loved him, had still doubts and hesitations, which prevented her from speaking to her uncle on the subject predominant in her thoughts. At length he looked at his watch, and rose suddenly, saying, " I must leave you, dear Eda. It is strange that Mr. Norries has not arrived, as I expected him on business.

No mention was made of the peculiar influence that the one party possessed over the other; and the tone, too, was so common-place, that Eda began to imagine she had been over-penetrating, and had discovered things that did not exist; so that she saw her uncle depart with comparative tranquillity, and remained alone for near an hour, trying to occupy herself with the ordinary amusements of the morning. At the end of that time, however, her maid opened the door of her own little sitting-room, saying, " Miss Clive, ma'am," and Helen was soon seated by Eda Brandon.

"What is the matter, Helen dear," said Eda, as the other, at her invitation, sat down on the sofa beside her. "You look pale; and agitated I am sure you are; for however we may hide it, dear Helen, and however difficult it may be to detect in line or feature, the anxiety of the heart writes itself upon the face in characters faint but very distinct.—You are anxious about something, Helen. Something has gone amiss. Tell me, dear Helen; for I think I need not say that if I can console or help, you have only to tell the how, to Eda Brandon."

"You are ever kind to your own little Helen, as you used to call me in my childhood, Eda," replied her beautiful companion. "You were then but a child yourself, but from that day to this there has been no change, and it is time that I should try to return the kindness. Dearest Eda, it is you I am anxious for—at least yours; and I cannot refrain from telling you what I know, in the hope that you may

be able to avert the danger; but you must promise me first not to mention one word to any one of that which I am about to say."

"But, my dear Helen, how can I avert danger if I may not mention to any one the circumstances?" inquired Eda. "I am a very weak, powerless creature, Helen; and as you say the danger menaces mine more than myself, if I must speak of it to no one, how can I warn them?"

"Listen, listen, Eda," was the answer. "You must not indeed tell what I relate, except as I point out; but still you shall have room enough to warn those you love of the danger their own acts are bringing upon them. Do you promise, Eda?"

"Certainly, Helen," replied Eda Brandon; "it is for you to speak or be silent; and I must take your intelligence on your own conditions. Yet I think you might trust me entirely to act for the best, Helen."

"I must not," said Helen Clive. "What I

have to say might involve the lives of others. Listen, then, Helen. Your uncle Sir Arthur is involved in schemes which will, I am sure, lead to his destruction. He is going this very evening to a place whence he will not come back without great guilt upon his head, and great danger hanging over him—perhaps he may never come back at all; but be sure that if he do go, peace and security are banished from him for ever. Persuade him not to go, Eda. That is the only thing which can save him."

She spoke with eager interest, and it was impossible, from her look, her tone, her whole manner, to doubt for one moment that she was fully impressed with the truth of what she said. Nor was Eda without her anxiety; all that she had seen the night before, all that she had remarked of her uncle's behaviour for several days, not only showed her that there was foundation for Helen Clive's assertion, but directed her suspicions aright; and, though

she paused, it was not in any doubt, but rather to consider how, without deceit, she could obtain further information from one who was not disposed to give it.

"I cannot persuade him, Helen," she said at length, in a sad tone, "without much more intelligence than you have given; he would only laugh at me.—Nay, perhaps with all that you could give, such would be the same result. Men are often sadly obstinate, and ridicule the prophetic fears of woman, who sees the events in which they are called to mingle, but from which she is excluded, not unfrequently more justly than themselves, because she is but a spectator. You have neither told me the place to which he is going, nor the hour, nor the object, no, nor the inducement.—Inducement?" she continued, in a thoughtful tone, as if speaking to herself—"what can be a sufficient inducement for my uncle, with everything to lose and nothing to gain by such commotions, to take part in any of these rash schemes?"

"I see that you have yourself had fears," answered Helen, "and that those fears have not led you far from the truth. Then as to the inducement, Eda——"

"Oh, yes! speak of that," replied Miss Brandon; "if I knew what it was, perhaps I might remove it."

"Perhaps so," said Helen, thoughtfully, and then paused for an instant to consider. "I think you can, Eda," she continued. "If I know looks, and can understand tones, you certainly will be able. But there are several inducements, as I suppose there are in all things. There is the vanity, I believe, of adhering steadily to opinions once professed, how much soever the man, the circumstances, or the times may be changed; but that would have been nothing, had they not led him on from act to act, and whenever he wavered—whenever he thought of how much he risked upon an almost hopeless undertaking—still forced him forward by fears."

"By fears!" exclaimed Eda. "Of what? Of

whom? Who has Sir Arthur Adelon to fear? What can he apprehend?"

She spoke somewhat proudly, and Helen gazed at her with a sad, but tender look, while she replied, in a few brief words, "He whom he fears, is one whom, if generously treated, there is no cause to fear. His name is Dudley, Eda! What he fears, is the discovery by Mr. Dudley of some dark transactions in the past —I know not what, for they did not mention it —the proofs of which these men have in their possession."

Eda sat before her, silent with amazement, for several moments; but then she put her hand to her brow, and the next moment a smile full of hope came up into her face. "If that be the inducement," she said, "I think it will be easily removed, dear Helen. But you spoke of others; may they not be sufficiently strong to carry him on in the same course still?"

"Oh, no," replied Helen, "that is the great motive. Take that away, and he will be safe.

Speak to Mr. Dudley first, Eda, and get him to say to Sir Arthur these words, or some that are like them: 'I have heard of some papers to be returned to me in a few days, Sir Arthur Adelon, affecting questions long past; but I think it right to say at once, that I wish all those gone-by affairs to be buried in oblivion; and I pledge you my word, if those papers are given to me, I will destroy them without looking at them.'"

"That is much to ask, Helen," exclaimed Eda, with a look of hesitation; "how can I tell that those papers do not affect his very dearest interests? I remember well that his father lost a fine property some years ago, by a suit at law. May not these very papers affect that transaction—may they not afford the means of recovering it?"

"They do not—they do not," answered Helen, eagerly; "and if they did, would he not promise *you*, Eda?"

The emphasis was so strong upon the word

"you," that it brought the colour into Eda Brandon's cheek; for she found that woman's eyes had seen at once into woman's heart. Still she shrunk from owning the love that was between Dudley and herself; and she replied, "I had better ask my cousin Edgar to speak to Mr. Dudley about it."

"Speak to him yourself, Eda," replied Helen, with a faint smile; "your voice will be more powerful. But let me proceed, for I must be home without delay. When you have Mr. Dudley's promise to speak as I have said, then beg Sir Arthur yourself, not to go this night where he is going. Mind not, Eda, whether he laughs or is angry, but do you detain him by every persuasion in your power."

"But if he should not come home?" said Eda; "such a thing is not impossible. He has been out very much lately, both by day and by night, and we are all ignorant of whither he goes on such occasions."

Helen once more paused before she replied,

and then said, with evident hesitation and fear, "You must send some persons down to seek him, then, dear Eda. Let them go down to a place called Mead's Farm, half-way between this and Barhampton, about eight o'clock to-night. There is a large empty barn there; and at it, or near it, they will find two or three men standing, who will not let them pass along the path unless they give the word, 'Justice.' Then, if they go along the road before them, towards Barhampton, they will find the person they are seeking. But, oh! I trust, Eda, he will be found before that, for then it will be almost too late."

"Who can I send?" said Eda, in a low tone, as if speaking to herself; but Helen caught the words, and replied, in an imploring tone, "Not Mr. Adelon, Eda—not your cousin. He might be led on with his father, and ruin overtake him too."

Eda smiled sweetly, and laid her hand upon Helen Clive's, with a gentle and affectionate

pressure; but, as she did so, some painful anticipations regarding the fate of her beautiful and highly-gifted companion crossed her mind, and she said, with a sigh, "Do you know I am almost a Chartist too, Helen?"

Helen started, saying, "Indeed! I do not understand what you mean, Eda."

"What I mean is, dear Helen," replied Miss Brandon, "that I wish there were no distinctions upon earth, but virtue, and excellence, and high qualities."

Helen now understood her, and cast down her eyes with a blush and a sigh; and Eda put her arm round her neck, adding, "In time of need, my Helen, come to me. Tell me all and everything, and above all, how I can serve you; and you shall not find Eda Brandon wanting. But hark! There is Lord Hadley's voice in the hall below."

Helen Clive turned pale and trembled. "He will not come here," she said, eagerly.

"Do not let him come here.—Oh! how shall I get away?"

"Why, what is the matter?" asked Eda, in surprise; but before Helen could answer, another voice, rich and harmonious, but speaking in grave and almost stern tones, was heard. "My lord, I beg your pardon, but this is a matter which admits of no delay. I must repeat my request for a few minutes' conversation with you immediately."

Lord Hadley was then heard answering sharply; and the next moment the voices ceased, as if the speakers had retired into one of the rooms below.

"You do not seem to like Lord Hadley, Helen," said Eda, in a thoughtful tone.

"I abhor him," answered Helen Clive, "and I have cause. But now I must return to the Grange, and I will ask you as a favour, dear Eda, to send some one with me by the way. It is very strange to feel afraid at going out

alone, for one who has been accustomed, as I have been, to roam about like a free bird, without one thought of danger or annoyance; but now I tremble at every step I take, and watch every coming figure with apprehension."

"And has this young man done this?" asked Eda Brandon. "It is sad, very sad; but you shall have protection, Helen."

Helen Clive did not reply, and Eda rang the bell, and gave orders that one of the old servants, who had been attached for twenty years to her father's house, should accompany Helen back to the Grange.

They then parted, after some more brief explanations; but just as Helen reached the foot of the stairs, where the servant was waiting for her, the door of the library was thrown violently open, and Lord Hadley appeared with a flushed and angry countenance. Mr. Dudley was standing two or three steps behind him, and his cheek too was hot, and his brow frowning.

Without seeing Helen, and, indeed, in the

blind fury of passion, without noticing any one else, the young nobleman turned before he left the library, and with a menacing gesture, said to Mr. Dudley, " Your insolence, sir, shall not go without notice. Don't suppose your rash and mercenary pretensions have escaped my eyes. Be you sure they will be treated with the contempt they merit; but I will take care that they shall be pursued no farther; for they shall be exposed to Sir Arthur Adelon this very day."

Dudley took a step forward, and replied, with a stern look, " Your lordship had better take care what use you make of my name in your discourse, for depend upon it, if you treat it disrespectfully, I shall know how to punish you for so doing."

It is probable that more angry words would have followed, but at that moment two other persons were added to the group, by the advance of Mr. Filmer from the outer hall, and by the appearance of the butler from the side of the offices, carrying a tray with letters.

"Two letters for your lordship," said the servant, advancing in a common-place manner, as if he observed nothing of the angry discussion which was going on. "A letter for you, sir," he continued, addressing Dudley, as soon as Lord Hadley had taken what he offered.

The young nobleman gave a hurried glance around; and the slight pause which had been afforded was sufficient to allow reflection to come to his aid. By this time Mr. Filmer was speaking to Helen Clive, and both she and the priest were moving fast towards the great doors of the house; but the presence of the two servants was now enough to restrain Lord Hadley's impetuous temper; and without opening the letters, he hurried away towards his bed-room, leaving Dudley alone in the library. The butler shut the door, and retired to tell the housekeeper and some of his fellow-servants all that which he had seen and heard, but which he had affected not to observe.

Dudley, in the meantime, laid down the letter on the table, and stood in bitter thought. Although a man of strong command over himself—command gained during a long period of adversity—he was naturally of a quick and eager disposition, and a severe struggle was taking place in his bosom at that moment to maintain the ascendancy of principle over passion.

"No!" he said, at length—"No. I will make one more effort to reclaim him. I will not dwell upon his insulting conduct towards me; but I will point out the wickedness and the folly of the course he is pursuing, and endeavour to call him back to honour and to right." The very determination served to calm him; and looking down upon the letter on the table, he took it up, saying, "I wonder who this can be from? I do not know the hand. I must see, for the seal is black." And opening it, he found the following words:—

"DEAR SIR,

"We have the melancholy task of informing you of the sudden decease, last night, at half-past nine o'clock, of our much respected friend and client, the Rev. Dr. Dudley, which took place at St. John's, just as he was about to retire to rest. Although we know that you will be greatly grieved at this sad event, we are forced to intrude some business upon your attention, under the following circumstances. About a fortnight ago, our late respected client, having felt some apoplectic symptoms, judged it right to send for Mr. Emerson, of our firm, in order to make his will, which was in due form signed, sealed, and delivered. He therein appointed you his sole executor, having bequeathed all his property, real and personal, to yourself, with the exception of a few small legacies. He has also requested you to make all the arrangements for his funeral as you may think proper, merely directing that it should be conducted in a plain and unosten-

tatious manner. It is therefore very necessary that you should return to Cambridge as soon as possible, or that you should send your directions by letter. In the meantime, we will take all proper steps in the matter, and trust to be honoured with your confidence, as we have been with that of your lamented relative for many years."

The letter was signed by a well-known law firm in Cambridge.

The first emotion in the mind of Edward Dudley was that of deep grief—grief, simple and unalloyed, for the loss of one whom he had truly loved; but the next was a feeling of bereavement. His staff was broken, his support gone. The only one in all the world who had acted a kindly, almost a parental part to him, for long, long years, was no more. He felt, as I have said, bereaved; for although the love of Eda Brandon—that love which had been cherished in secret by both, was a great consolation and a comfort, yet it

was so different, both in kind and in degree, from the affection entertained for him by his own relation, that they could not be brought at all into comparison the one with the other. New attachments never wholly compensate for old ties. They fill a different, perhaps a larger place, but they leave the others vacant. He mourned sincerely then; and it was some time before the thought—which would have presented itself much earlier to a worldly mind—came even to his memory—the thought that the riches of the earth, which can never compete, in a generous heart, with those affections which are above the earth, but which influence so much the course of human life and mortal happiness, were now his. That he was no more the impoverished student, seeking by hard labour to recover the position which his family had once maintained. That he was not only independent, but wealthy; and though perhaps not exactly upon a par in point of fortune with the heiress of large hereditary possessions, still no unportioned adventurer, seeking to mend his

condition with her gold. He knew that his father's first cousin had himself inherited a very fair estate. He knew that he had held rich benefices and lucrative offices; and he also knew that, though a liberal and a kindly man, he had been also a very prudent one, and had certainly lived far within his income. Thus he was certain of more than a moderate fortune; but although it would be folly to deny that such a conviction was a relief to his mind, still sincere grief was predominant, and he felt that the wealth he had acquired by the loss of a friend could in no degree compensate for the bereavement.

While he thus meditated, he heard a quick but heavy step upon the stairs, the glass doors between the hall and the vestibule bang with a force which might almost have shaken the panes from the frame, and the moment after, he saw the figure of Lord Hadley pass the windows of the library. Dudley instantly took up his hat, darted out and looked around; but the young nobleman had disappeared, and

seeing one of the gamekeepers who had been out with him and Edgar in the morning, walking slowly away from the house, he stopped him, and asked which way the young nobleman had taken. His manner was quick and eager, and the cloud of grief was still upon his brow, so that the man looked at him for a moment with some surprise before he answered. He then pointed out the way, and Dudley was turning at once to follow it, when the butler came out upon the terrace, saying, with a low bow, "Miss Brandon wishes to speak with you for a few moments, sir, if you are not otherwise engaged."

"If the business is not of great importance," said Dudley, "I will be back in ten minutes."

"It is nothing particular, I believe, sir," answered the man; "she has just had a note from Sir Arthur to say he wont be back to dinner. I fancy that is all."

"Then say I will wait upon her in ten minutes," replied Dudley; "I wish to catch

Lord Hadley for a moment before he proceeds farther. We have something to speak about which must be settled at once." And he sped upon the way, as the gamekeeper had directed. It was in the direction of the Grange.

Ten minutes elapsed, and Dudley had not returned. A quarter of an hour, half an hour, an hour; and when he came back he was evidently a good deal excited. He calmed himself down, however, as much as possible, and immediately requested an interview with Miss Brandon, who came down and joined him in the library, remaining with him nearly till dinner-time. They were at last interrupted by the priest, who came in search of a book, and shortly after the dressing-bell rang. At the dinner-table, Lord Hadley, who appeared very late, was gloomy and thoughtful. He never addressed a word to Mr. Dudley, and spoke but little to Eda or the priest, who took one end of the table. Edgar Adelon did not at all seek to converse with him; and when